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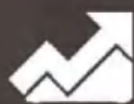


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magazine takes all responsible steps
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rubbish with spanners.

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Don't be swayed...

This month's main test is one of those 'opinion-dividing' machines that we often love to hate.

Suzuki's RE5 was both loved and loathed when it came out in the 1970s and was much-maligned and seen as a bit of a quirky bike as the years went by. Maybe like the Honda CX500, it's almost become loved, loathed and then loved again? Certainly owners I've met have loved 'em and Steve Cooper this month was rather taken by it.

It's always been this way though, hasn't it? I've just bought yet another project bike, this time a Kawasaki GPz900R. Fine, I hear you say, but speak to the purists and they tell me I've bought the wrong one. Mine isn't the first, halo model from 1984, the A1, nor is it the best version with the brake and chassis mods (A7-A8) instead I've plumped for an A6. With

the understated colours of black and gold, a few owners have told me it's the worst colour to have too (I can't even get that right...) but hell, what do I care? I've got a REAL GPz900R and I can't wait to get it all sorted and in some semblance of shape.

Ashamedly, I've even been one of the naysayers too. A couple of years ago, my barbed criticism of Honda's Super Dream from the late 1970s to the mid-1980s led to an invite from the owners' club to ride one – and I rather liked it.

So let's all wave the flag for the lame duck bikes or forgotten models that people seem to shun. More power to you all, I say!

Bertie Simmonds editor



Bertie Simmonds

Needs a stiff one
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A drink, he means and two new projects this month for the big man.



Steve Cooper

Older/Nicer stuff editor
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Scoop tests the Suzuki RE5 rotary and shows us how to sort oil injectors.



Andy Westlake

West Country Correspondent
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Andy shows us a reader's awesome little Suzuki ASSO.



Andy Bolas

Quick Spin Virgin
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Serial bike-buyer Andy B bought and rode a Yamaha TRX. What did he think?



Niall Mackenzie

North of the Border Nice Bloke
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Triple British Superbike champ Niall is nearly done with his RD400F!



Mark Haycock

Getting connected.
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Master Mark is showing us how to sort electrical connections and back with Q&A.



James Whitham

Soon-to-be-X7-sorted!
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He's tight, he's cool, he knows his tools!



Stan Stephens

Lord of the Piston Ring
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Stan reveals that even the best make mistakes. It's what they do after...



Steve Parrish

He only does it once a year...
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Appear in the mag, we mean. At last progress on the FZ750!



John Nutting

The Master of MIRA
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Our own Nutters heads back in time once more to tell us about 1985.



Alan Dowds

More motor mayhem!
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Canny Scot Dowds finds something wrong with his motor!



Paul Berryman

Has a Super Sausage...
editorial@classicmechanics.com

...fettish as that's where he collars brilliant bike builders: see page 26!



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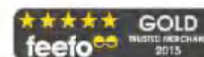
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Fantastic Fabrizio!

WORDS: BERTIE SIMMONDS PHOTO: MORTONS ARCHIVE

Fabrizio Pirovano was the original 'pocket rocket' and his all-action style, clambering all over his BYRD Yamaha OW-01 in the early 1990s was the stuff of legend.

A rock-hard motocrosser, he was a national champion in that tough regime before heading to the Tarmac in 1986. Just two years later and he was fighting for the World Superbike championship, such was his adaptability. He was a real character in the mould of what the WSB series was aimed at: a talented privateer with a modicum of factory support. His 1988 FZ750 was emblazoned with a raft of small sponsors in a team managed by his sister. But his stature grew (even if he didn't, he got the pocket rocket nickname for a reason) and his 10 race wins in WSB as well as runner-up spots in 1988 and 1990 showed what he was capable of. Of course, he was well known on Yamaha's FZ and FZR-OW-01 machinery (he also scored the YZF750's first WSB win) but he also rode for Ducati in World Superbikes and went with them to the new World Supersport championship.

This was a series he finally won in 1998 on the Suzuki GSX-R600. This shot from the Mortons Archive shows him in full-flight during the 2000 season. Tough as they come, this hard-as-nails racer once told me why I really should report on him more often in the UK-based press, even though he was Italian. Well, Fabi, it's only taken 20 years but the debt is finally paid!

Pirovano finally retired from international bike racing in 2001 following a brace of top five finishes in World Supersport, but he will be forever remembered as one of the first real characters in World Superbike. **cm**

■ Want to get hold of pictures from Morton's Archive?
Then head to: www.mortonsarchive.com

YAMAHA TRX 850

WORDS: ANDY BOLAS PICS: JOE DICK

It's the ultimate test ride: Andy Bolas buys a twin he's been hankering after for ages, but does the quirky TRX win him over or will it be a quick resale? Let's find out!

It is 19 years since the release of the Yamaha TRX850 and I'm finally realising my dream of riding and owning one.

Yes folks I've brought another bike and this one comes thanks to *CMM* reader Ian Hunt, who read my 'Coming Classics' piece and wondered if I wanted to make another addition to the Bolas stable. Well, what could I say?

Now I know they say you should never meet your heroes but I've met Kevin Schwantz and Niall Mackenzie and they were great, but will the TRX live up to my expectations after all these years or will I need to get shot of my rose tinted specs?

Looking around my latest steed takes me back to 1996 standing outside PW Ranger (as it was back then) the TRX's metallic blue paint glistening in the sun and even the silver finish on the Ducati-style lattice frame is sparkling too. Practicalities first: popping the rear seat off reveals a boot of near-FireBlade proportions. Being a shrewd purchaser, I thought maybe the aftermarket belly-pan could have been hiding some corrosion or other mischief but on close inspection this is not the case. This is a really clean example and a credit to its previous owner.

So, other than mismatched tyres, loose head-races and the brakes needing to bed in all seemed well: but I thought it best to sort these issues before we test the bike in the mag so it was out with the spanners, head-races adjusted correctly and a pair of BT016 Pros fitted. Back out again and we're all good now and ready to go.

Considering the hit-and-miss build quality that Yamaha used to put us through during the mid-90s this bike is in very nice condition showing a mileage of just 13k although it does show signs of a slight tumble with a few light scuffs on its right-hand silencer; the rest of the bike is great and other than a nasty blue screen, nice EBC front disks and that belly-pan is more or less totally standard.







Cocking a leg over the bike you realise how roomy it actually is and not as race oriented as its looks would suggest: the mirrors actually allow you to see behind you rather than just your elbows (how novel), everything is within reach and easy to use. The switch gear and clocks are very clear and functional although no fuel light or gauge is provided but you do get a fiddly-as-hell to get at fuel tap.

The choke, which is situated between the left hand frame rail and fairing (looks like it was stolen from an old Mini), requires little more than a few seconds of being on before the 38mm carbs can cope on their own and allow the parallel twin to idle on its own and fool you into thinking you have a V-twin under you: this sleight of hand is down to Yamaha using a 270 degree firing order.

Setting off and the bike is instantly more lumpy than an inline four, as you'd expect, so it needed a few more revs than I'd thought it would to pull away cleanly. Thankfully the clutch action is smooth and light, which helps although the motor sounds a little muffled on the standard pipes. It pulls strong from the bottom end around 3000rpm until it runs out of steam just on its 8000rpm redline, then just hook another gear from the slick feeling five-speed box and off we go again. Out on the road and riding with my friend who's riding my 95 CBR600F-S I find that the TRX is deceptively quick for what it is and while it's not the fastest thing on two wheels it's the low revving punchy nature of the motor that suits the fast and bumpy A and B roads that I ride on along with its solid chassis and softish suspension nothing gets too out of hand. It also helps that the motor doesn't have the power to overwhelm the chassis I guess: think of it as an easy-going introduction to V or parallel big twins.

The brakes on this particular bike are amazing considering they are the original Sumitomo four-pots (many people upgrade to Blue Spots for greater stopping power) and must have been refreshed fairly recently as it stops really well with plenty of power

ABOVE: Belly-pan is non standard, but excitement is.

BELOW: Lovely and lithe. That's the TRX. Front calipers can leave rider wanting more oomph!

and feel even with its standard rubber hoses. One negative I must mention is the headlight which is very poor and almost as bad as a Fazer 600, perhaps this could be upgraded with a different bulb?

It's such a shame that Yamaha overpriced the TRX when it was released as it's such an awesome bike with bags of character and when looked after the build quality seems to hold up fairly well. But at £6999 it was drastically overpriced so I think Yamaha missed a trick with it. If you look at the MT-09 which is sort of a modern day equivalent of the 850, they have priced that very aggressively: I wonder if in 20 years' time we'll be reading about one of those? I guess I'm a lover of Japanese bikes, as I don't think I could get as excited about a Ducati 900SS which – compared to the TRX – I think looks rather dated now and would probably be





IN DETAIL: 1/ Simple clocks shaded by awful blue screen. 2/ Nice to see original cans: aftermarket ones liberate more sound and power. 3/ Build quality isn't too bad. 4/ Feels like a V-twin, can produce up to 100bhp with big mods. 5/ Skinny rear end is what you want on a twin.

besieged with various mechanical woes or is that just my misinformed opinion? Not that the TRX is immune from mechanical woes according to the doom-mongers. Apparently they drink oil, knock cranks out and stretch valves, although I've also heard lots of stories of high mileage bikes which have just been maintained regularly. On a more serious note though, prolonged wheelies can starve the dry sump motor of oil so we won't be doing too many of those!

This is the first bike I have had in a long time that I've tried to get out on whenever a bit of good weather showed itself. Or it's had me popping into the garage to have a look at it. The last bike that did this to me was my TZR250 3XV V-twin. When you think I've owned more than 120 bikes that says a lot. Well, it does to me, anyway! **CMM**



SPECIFICATION

YAMAHA TRX 850

ENGINE

Type: 849cc liquid-cooled four-stroke dohc parallel twin with 5 valves per cylinder

MAXIMUM POWER

79bhp @ 7500rpm

MAXIMUM TORQUE

63lb-ft @ 6000rpm

TRANSMISSION

5-speed

FINAL DRIVE

Chain

SUSPENSION

Front: 41mm right-way-up forks adjustable for preload and rebound damping.

Rear: rising-rate monoshock adjustable for preload, rebound and compression damping.

BRAKES

Front: twin 298mm floating disks with 4-piston calipers.

Rear: 248mm disk with twin opposed piston caliper.

TYRES

Front: 120-60-17

Rear: 160-60-17

SEAT HEIGHT

795mm

WHEEL BASE

1435mm

DRY WEIGHT

190kg

FUEL CAPACITY

18 litres

I owned (this) one – Ian Hunt CMM reader

My time with the TRX started in May of 2013 when a friend at work asked if I could take a look at his dad's old bike as it had been stood for six years, luckily in a dry well-ventilated garage. When I found out the bike was a TRX I was keen to get hold of it myself as I have always liked the TRX, having ridden and worked on three previously belonging to friends in the past.

When I got the bike it obviously didn't run but after cleaning the fuel tank out, stripping the carbs down, replacing the jets, both



diaphragms, rebuilding the fuel tap and a new battery she was good to go. After a real good clean I found I had a real gem of a bike. I've owned lots of bikes over the years but none of them (barring my two-strokes, like my RGVs) have had as much charm and character as the TRX has.

Had I not been too preoccupied working on our new house I would have probably kept the TRX and would certainly have another in a flash when finances allow, if I don't find a bargain two-stroke that is!

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Motorcycle Live!

This is your last call for the experience that is Motorcycle Live, which takes place from November 28 to December 6.

Over the last few years the show has had a larger classic showing and following and that is what makes it one of the best days out in the motorcycling calendar. As well as all the latest motorcycles you will also now see a burgeoning classic presence.

Suzuki GB and its Vintage Parts Stand over the duration of the show will be one of the focal points of the

classic scene. It will be there – to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the GSX-R750 family – that they will be building up an original slab-sider during the show. Check out page 50 for more on that story. Suzuki will also be having a display of some of the finest examples of the GSX-R breed from all capacities on their stand. So don't miss that either.

The National Motorcycle Museum which is literally based over the road from Motorcycle Live, will be providing a unique 'hands-on' display where



British motorcycling literally will come to life. Add into the mix a huge number of celebs at the show including our own James Whitham

and Steve Parrish on the main stage holding regular quizzes, Q&A sessions and the like and you really can't miss it.

■ The show is held at Birmingham's NEC and for more information about tickets go to: www.motorcyclelive.co.uk

RETRO-REBOOT IS ON THE MONEY

Well, weren't we hitting the mark in last month's Retro Reboot? Can you tell the difference between these two?

Our Retro Reboot wizard Kar Lee asked the question as to whether Kawasaki's H2 – the firm's supercharged superbike – would make a good Retro Reboot of the GPZ1000RX, a sports-tourer of the late 1980s. Well blow us down with a, er, blower: look what Kawasaki has mooted as its latest concept model! It's pretty damn close. CMM went on sale on October

21st with this GPZ in grey (below) while at the end of that month Kawasaki was at the show unveiling this hottie (right.)

The show is where the Japanese showcase their prototype concept machines and Kawasaki decided to talk about new supercharger tech and future products. This is Concept SC 01 – or Spirit Charger – and represents one of the directions Kawasaki's design team is considering for the future of its forced induction motorcycle line.



The blurb says: "With softer more luxurious materials chosen over the hard-edged performance focused approach of the Ninja H2 and Ninja H2R, the flowing lines of 'Spirit Charger' suggest a machine for all day, long distance enjoyment and comfort."

The president of Kawasaki's Motorcycle and Engineering Company, Kenji Tomida, said: "Firstly there is a need for machines to possess power and grace, secondly Kawasaki motorcycles should continue to be fun and rewarding to ride and, thirdly, the ongoing

reliance on the skills within the entire Kawasaki Group harnessing cutting edge technology to enrich the lives of people worldwide".

We love it. And of interest is this: the classic world's own Dave Marsden of Z Power was called up a few years back by Kawasaki big-wigs asking what direction future models should go in: hence the use of the H2 and H2R names and the use of technology (a supercharger) to make bikes have an exciting power delivery.

NEWS



FZ FOR SALE!

Our cover star from the March issue is up for sale. The Steve Adams 'Lucky 7' build was our main road test and is a real act of how to subtly modify a legendary machine.

Giving you the option to 'double-take' are the following modifications: 1996 Thunderace wheel, swingarm, 48mm forks and Blue Spot brakes, Lucky 7 footrest plates, Nitron GSX-R750 NTR R1 shock and delightful RCD twin-filler fuel tank. Under the half-fairing is a Pete Beale refreshed FZ750 motor but with a lightly-skimmed head, Micron headers allied to Racefit custom silencer, stage 1 Dynojet and K&N filters and a cable clutch conversion.

While the spec is cool it's the looks that are ace: literally, thanks to the beefy components from the Thunderace giving the bike a more purposeful front and rear end.

Steve himself is selling to make way for other projects, including a possible Triumph Speed Triple, so if you want something in your garage which our own Paul Berryman says was 'four years well spent' then consider offers in the region of £6500 and contact editor Bert (and no he's not getting commission...).

BUDGET FLIPPING LID

Feature-packed and cheap as chips, Duchinni's new D606 Flip Front Helmet is a great choice for budget-conscious commuters and tourers alike. Its single button visor and chin bar release makes light work of any face-to-face situations, such as fuel stops, asking for directions or grabbing a swift snack or drink on the go. It has a quick-release seat-belt chin strap, anti-scratch visor, integral sun visor, a full venting system and removable/washable liner. It comes in sizes XS-XL in plain white or black, and retails at just £89.99 including VAT. The Key Collection on 0117 971 9200 or visit www.thekeycollection.co.uk for details.



MARK WILLIAMS

ON AND ON AND ON WITH THE SHOW

Mark Williams looks with dread to the annual Stafford pilgrimage but loves it. Awww!

Although I regularly attend similar events at Kempton and Craven Arms, it's not too outrageous to claim that the high point of my motorbicycling year is the *Classic Mechanics Show* at Stafford every October, and maybe it's yours, too. And yet every year as the date draws nearer, I'm filled with a strange mixture of dread and excited anticipation, and here's why.

The things that I love about this annual wing-ding are as follows: the chance to meet and josh with old friends and colleagues who I rarely if ever get to see elsewhere; the huge variety of machinery – from impossibly immaculate restorations to rusty old dogs – in both cases embracing familiar and unfamiliar models from my riding heydays in the 1960s, 70s and 80s; rummaging around the autojumble and accessory stalls and coming home with bags of swag... even if it's stuff I didn't really need or could reasonably afford; the Wall of Death that never fails to impress, indeed it so impressed my then girlfriend with a biking culture she never knew existed four years ago that she married me; people watching, because all human and quite a bit of inhuman bikey life throngs to these gigs (albeit if, and sadly, rather too much of it in wheelchairs or on crutches).

But all this is offset by a catalogue of misery which includes the sometimes inclement weather which means squelching round the outdoor plots which may then be lacking in crucial autojumbler who, dispirited by the sheeting rain, have packed up and left by the time I get there (which is always on the Sunday). I also invariably forget to bring the list I made of stuff I really, really need to buy and of course can't remember what most of it was, and one consequence of this is that I instead buy stuff I really, really don't need. And then there are the occasional awkward encounters with traders who stitched me up 10 years ago with a battery that didn't fit, or journalists that I stitched up 30 years ago by not paying a kill fee for grammatically challenged gibberish about grey imports no-one cared about anyway. Fighting my way through the Main Hall to reach the more obscure bric-a-brac stalls in Side Hall One, especially when some old racer is being interviewed onstage in front of the adoring hordes also makes me testy, (road racing's not my bag, see).

And then let's not forget – because I absolutely can't – the unbearably slow crawl through Stafford's hinterlands to the car parks which can knock 20 minutes of vital mooching and haggling time off the day's purpose, and which always coincides with a desperate need for a pee. Talking of which, then there are the Showground toilets which are somewhere between a disgrace and a joke and which there are unquestionably too few of.

But be that as it all may, and it may, this autumn I did particularly well, copping a Brazilian-made Honda CG125 fuel tank for my woefully slow street-tracker build and the discovery of GB Motorcycles' stall on the main outdoor drag. Not only did GB have all their used, mainly Japanese parts clearly labelled – I mean can you tell the diff between a TS125 and a TS185 clutch bearing? – but, upon discovering that they didn't have a CB400N steering head adjuster nut and some other obscure items I desperately needed, a nice lady took down my number and said she'd phone me, "Because I think we've got them back at the ranch." And what's more, she did and they had! And then there was the sheet of 2.5mm alloy I needed to fashion a minimalist instrument panel for my VT500 Ascot, and the Yuasa battery conditioner to keep what's becoming a motley fleet of ancient 'Ondas from losing their juice this coming winter – knock-out value at fifteen quid.

So all in all and this year at least, the excitement was justified and the dread wasn't... which pretty much sums up my motorbicycling year.



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WIN THIS BIKE!

The South Cheshire section of the VJMC are raffling off this very handsome machine (below) in aid of charity from now until next year.

Will Barber, coordinator for South Cheshire VJMC, says: "Next year's charity donation is a bit different in that we are raffling off a fully restored 1972 Suzuki A100K motorcycle! The bike has been completely stripped and all parts passed to each of our club members. The parts are either being restored or replaced, with local businesses helping out by discounts or free of charge services. I have just finished building a web page for



the VJMC Macmillan

Cancer Charity Bike at Just Giving. Here you can donate however much you like, and in return be nominated raffle ticket numbers with a chance to win the bike!" Will says that the page also will have pictures showing the progress of the restoration in the coming months. You can see here that the bike is looking in need of lots of TLC at the moment, pre-resto. Will adds: "The raffle for the fully restored and registered 1972 Suzuki A100K will take place on Sunday, August 7, 2016 at our annual VJMC Classic ride-in bike show. This event takes place every year at the Bhurtpore Inn, Wrenbury Road, Aston, Cheshire CW5 8DQ. So come along and enjoy the day. If the winner is not present on the day, they will be notified the same day."



Reader remembered

No less an icon than Kenny Roberts has led tributes to *CMM* reader Mike Rusworth, who was tragically killed on his motorcycle in October.

Mike was well-known in his home area of Leyland and was a massive fan of King Kenny, even going as far as making sure his bikes (and himself) were decked out in Kenny Speedblock yellow. His brother, Andrew Warner said: "Kenny Roberts heard about Mike's adulation of him and sent a personal tribute for Michael directly to me, which was amazing. Mike and I both subscribe to *CMM* and love restoring classic Japanese bikes. We have everything from H2C, Z1A, RG500, RD500, the list goes on. Mike was always trying to get me to do all my Yamahas



in Kenny Roberts colours rather than standard. Of course all his Yamahas were finished in black and yellow, which for a man who had a severe phobia of wasps was a strange choice! Mike was a quiet and unassuming man, friendly to everyone and none of us realised just how popular and well liked he was until this happened."

SCOOPERMAN!

The sunny side of the classic world with the VJMC's Steve Cooper

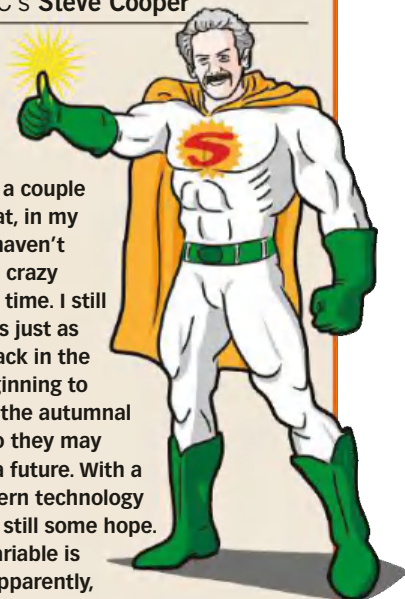
It's nice to know that in an ever-changing world there are a couple of constants that, in my world at least, haven't moved with the crazy modern pace of time. I still love two-strokes just as much as I did back in the day and I'm beginning to think that after the autumnal VW diesel fiasco they may very well have a future. With a little bit of modern technology I'm sure there's still some hope. The second invariable is that I am still, apparently, a social pariah. I know this to be a fact following a trip the local surgery to see my GP. Both he and the receptionist looked at me as if I was some lower form of life simply because I carried with me a crash helmet and wore a bike jacket. I ride when I can for enjoyment and ease of parking. Surely I am the same person whether I turn up in car or on a bike: apparently not.

Many years ago I had what's now politely termed 'an off' which necessitated a trip to A&E, the regulation plaster cast and a neck brace. Having phoned in sick (justifiably in my opinion) I was asked to present myself to the head of department when I was able to get a lift in.

The interview was cursorily pleasant regarding the injuries, brusque in terms of my predicted date for a return to work and ultimately vitriolic about my chosen method of transport. I was asked "when are you going to stop messing around with bikes and grow up?" Almost from another plane I heard a voice similar to mine saying: "what, and be boring like you?" To this day I still have no idea how I kept that job and didn't jeopardise my future. I blamed the pain killers at the time I think.

Few people seem to understand why anyone would choose a method of transport that's inherently unstable. If the motorcycle was invented today it simply wouldn't be allowed on the road. The fact that grown adults of a certain age choose to ride old motorcycles is probably a concept beyond almost everyone who's not similarly afflicted. Especially in the UK pretty much anyone on two wheels is still demonised by the media and mocked by society yet surely we are a minority interest in our own right? If we are truly supposed to celebrate diversity shouldn't we, the motorcycling public, be actively supported by government in particular and society as a whole? No, I won't be holding my breath either!

■ www.vjmc.com



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DECEMBER

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December 13

While we love the modern day motorcycle part-finder that is the internet, we also love the chance to root around in piles of old parts in person – and this is the best place to do it.

Whether it's a nut, bolt, washer, winding, reg-rectifier, seat, fairing or a full-on project there isn't a better place to go pre-Christmas to find the parts you need.

Normous Newark Autojumble is a great day out for any motorcycle enthusiast as it features stalls chock full of parts, places to find restoration services and related products all based in the open area of the Newark Showground.

You could choose to walk around the hundreds of trade plots ticking off parts from your list as you get 'em, or just stand around nattering to the stall holder. You know the one, the bloke in the tracksuit he's had since the early 1990s. Soak up the atmosphere, smell the old oil, buy the parts and take in a cuppa in a Styrofoam cup and have a burger or three. Remember, it's nearly Christmas so you'll only be putting even more weight on soon anyways. Normous



Newark is run by our very own event staff from Mortons Media, each event attracts a large number of visitors from across the UK in search of the great finds and bargains on offer.

■ Normous Newark Autojumble is held at Drove Lane, Winthorpe, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG24 2NY. For more go to: www.newarkautojumble.co.uk and www.classicbikeshows.com

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05 Southern Classic Off Road Show and Jumble,
Kempton Park Race Course, Sunbury-on-Thames, Middlesex TW16 5AQ:
www.egp-enterprises.co.uk

06 Ace Café Club Day Xmas Meet,
Ace Cafe, Ace Corner, North Circular, Stonebridge, London NW10 7UD
0208 961 1000.

06 Burton Annual Toy Run,
from 9am. Burton-on-Trent, Staffs:
www.unwantedmcc.co.uk

12 Three Amigos Annual Toy Run,
midday, The Commons Car Park, Pembroke, South West Wales, SA71 4EA.

13 Xmas Toy Run,
Ace Cafe, London:
www.ace-cafe-london.com

13 Normous Newark Autojumble:
www.newarkautojumble.co.uk

20 Paws n' Claws Pet Food Run to Mayhew Animal House,
Ace Café 0208 961 1000.

20 Xmas Carol Service,
Ace Café www.ace-cafe-london.com

26 Boxing Day Cold Turkey Meet,
Ace Café 0208 961 1000.

27 Huddersfield Autojumble,
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FZS-TASTIC!

YOU PLONKER BERTIE!

During a lull in the fighting here, I was just browsing through the October issue of *CMM* and I came upon the article, on page 86, by yourself and Peter Watmough, regarding the 'Handling small parts'. I have to confess that I was a little miffed to read that "specialised bolts are not available"! Clearly, it's not just your readers that aren't looking at the adverts: it's the editor as well! Please see page 93 of that very issue for our wonderful advert. Did we not force enough tea and biscuits upon you when you visited us a few years back? I'm now an old git with a failing memory but I definitely remember you coming here to see what we do and then writing a very nice article about us. If you'd like to refresh your memory, we'd be delighted to see you again and force more tea and biscuits upon you! Don't worry I'm not sulking... too much!

Phil Denton Engineering Limited



Great feature on the Yamaha FZS600 Fazer last month! I've had two of these, the first a 1998 model as in the article, on which I clocked up 54,000 miles, and my current ride an '03 model which has now done over 72,000 miles. Both have been great 'do-everything' bikes which have been used for commuting into London,

passing my IAM test on and more-recently touring. I don't commute any more and now use the bike for all-day ride outs, often doing up to 300 miles plus in a day on our favourite run down into Wales and back for lunch. I also did a trip to Scotland this summer doing 2000 miles in a week. Often it's the smallest bike in

the group but has no trouble keeping up and often leading. It also gives reasonable comfort and great fuel economy. What more could you want? That aside, what's happened to Stavros' FZ750? Yet again we were promised an appearance last month but still nothing. It looked pretty much finished at last year's NEC show so why the delay? I've been known to take my time building bikes but I'm beginning to wonder if I'll ever live long enough to see it finished!

Colin Culverwell

Bertie says: "Good call on the Fazer. They indeed rock! As to Stavros' FZ, you'll see it in this issue. All of our projects rely on the owner to get things done – and life sometimes (understandably) takes over. Also sometimes I have to shuffle things about in each issue, sorry!"



Bertie says: "I'm sitting here head bowed in shame Phil! After all that you and Steve told me about the excellence of what you can do for our readers and restorers by supplying high-quality bolts and fittings engineered with precision – as well as your amazing engine builds – I really didn't deserve that whole pack of Bourbons!"

PUCH AND POOCHES?

I have just returned from my annual weekend pilgrimage to the *CMM* Stafford Bike show. I've been going since the 80s and as a keen photographer

I'm always snapping away at interesting machines and bits. This year however I noticed the much overlooked minority attendee: the dog. Man's best friend has been attending the show longer than me and doubtless completely unaware of the correct colour coding for a 1966 Bonnie or levers on a Z1. Anyway attached are a few of the photos I took and hope you like them. By the way the tenuous link in the title refers to my own 1980 Puch Zippy which has been in the family since new and was featured in your Show Us Yours in the late

90s. Anyway, hope you like the pics of the pooches!

Paul Davies

Bertie says: "Indeed Paul, good call! I'm always petting pooches at Stafford."





THEN AND NOW



I'm attaching two photos. The first one in black and white was taken about 60 years ago and shows me, and my brother Rick, on our dad's 1930s Coventry Eagle 250cc two-stroke. I was the youngest so was relegated to the pillion! That bike was my introduction to motorcycling when dad took me for a spin around the block on it, which led to a lifetime's interest and ownership of bikes. The second photo was taken recently when Rick was on a visit to this country from his home in Cyprus and we decided to replicate that old photo using my current bike, a 1977 Suzuki GT 250. I'm still the youngest so was still relegated to the pillion! I also recall that as a lad my magazine of choice was *Motorcycle Mechanics* and now I am a subscriber to *CMM*: so how's that for brand loyalty!

Phil Ramswell

Bertie says: "Phil! Thank you for these pics and keep on biking!"

WHIP ROUND?

November's was another splendid issue, but I'm feeling that austerity has caught up with your editor. Reading about the Fazer I spotted the rotund one in full-flight and

noticed his old boots had seen better days (see Star Letter pic). Do *CMM* not pay you enough mate? I'm thinking of having a whip-round for you. Or perhaps the chamfered look makes you think you're Mike Hailwood? If so, I saw you at Anglesey so I've got news for you sunshine, and it's not good...

Pete Barker

Bertie says: "Even when I was fast (in the past) I was slow! I raced in these boots (only four times) so look cool and feel comfy. I do have some new SIDs waiting so I can use those. We all wear the comfy kit, don't we?"

NO WHITE VAN MAN!

I've been a subscriber for many moons and love getting my grubby mitts on my latest *CMM*. So you can imagine that I was most disappointed on getting to page 128 of the November issue and seeing an advert for vans! A whole page of vans for sale, what is happening? Please Bertie, this is a publication for bikes and motorbikes and not vans. If I'd wanted to see or buy a van I would have brought a van mag or trawled the net for (you guessed it) a van! I love this mag and the contributors and the general layout has much improved over the years as it did lose its spark at one point, so keep up the good work, but please: NO MORE VANS!

Kevan Kingsnorth

Bertie says: "Kev, you even have a van in your name? Or was that for a joke? Sorry

Letter of the law

I read Paul Knowles' letter in the latest *CMM* with interest – so it's not just me then! In 2014 I bought a GSX-R750L which was already on a SORN. I was given the V5 with the sale so sent it off to have ownership transferred to my name and enclosed a SORN declaration form: according to their website you can do this. A little while later I got a letter back from them saying I couldn't SORN the bike as I wasn't the registered keeper: it was obviously far too difficult to correlate the two documents in the same envelope. I rang them up – "no idea why this has happened, no we can't do anything over the phone, try again when you have the V5".

So a few days later the V5 comes back in my name and I SORN the bike successfully online. I keep the confirmation email both electronically and in hard copy and check via the DVLA website that the status of the bike is now showing it is SORNed. Several months later, after restoring the bike, I get an MoT and go online to tax it. The bike is now showing up as 'untaxed and unSORNed' on their system and I may be liable to a fine. I ring them and they say they have no idea how it's happened, even though I have a reference number they can't sort it over the phone. So I write to them, quoting the reference number, enclosing a copy of the SORN confirmation email, and stating that I do not accept I am guilty of an offence. Months go by and I get a letter apologising for the error and stating that they have amended their records.

It begs the question, what is going wrong with their computer system? The moral is definitely to keep every confirmation, reference number and communication in both hard and electronic copy!

Andy Overton

Bertie says: "Wise words Andy. Keep every bit of information you can."

you're upset, but it was an advert, not editorial and to be honest many of us need vans to move bikes around to shows..."

STINKER STINGER!

Being in the States we're behind with the magazine, but I started my own 'Project Stinger' some months ago so read with interest Steve Cooper's ongoing issues. Mine is in about the same state as yours in part 8. I've attached a pic of it, and also an extra wiring loom and oil pump. You'd be welcome to the loom and operating arm off of the pump if you need them! You folks have helped me with so much information over the years that I'll ship to you for no cost, if they'd be useful. While your project was heavily weather damaged, mine being from California wasn't. It was however, totally molested by a knuckle dragger with a large hammer. It was a horrid job

of various fixes and incorrect hardware. Bore diameter was too small for first size over pistons. Only one piston was left. New seals, pistons and rings, plus a good cylinder hone has brought it back to spec. A pressure test revealed leaks that were fixed and I'd encourage you to do one. I ran into the same gasket kit issue you did, but have been able to source most of what I need from dealers and eBay. Mine will be a non-concourse with rattle-can epoxy paints in Candy Red. I look forward to seeing yours finished!

Mike Corcoran

Bertie says: "Thanks Mike! Hopefully Scoop will get it finished ONE day."



Show us yours



We want to see YOUR pride and joy in our pages, so you can share what you ride and restore with fellow readers.

Email your hi-res shots to **bsimmonds@mortons.co.uk** or mail in some photos to the address at the front of the mag. Let us know what you've done and how you've done it and send before and after shots if you can. Do get in touch. *Bertie.*

We've teamed up with **The Hobby Company** www.hobbyco.net which distributes Tamiya plastic motorcycle kits in the UK to give our favourite restoration one of its amazing motorcycles in miniature. So, send in your pictures of your bikes and you could win the chance to indulge in a miniature motorcycle restoration of your own. Remember to send your name and address on each submission so we know where to post the kit.

John Robinson's 1987 BMW R100

In its day, it would have been regarded as a bit 'pipe and slippers' by the average sports bike rider. I know that at the time it was new in the late 80s, I was riding a Suzuki GSX 1100 and wouldn't have considered a BMW! As time has rolled on, I've now got a bit of a fascination for the old airhead boxers, and thought that I'd build this one with a bit of a twist. This is my '87 BMW R100, that started life as an R100RT. I bought it dressed as an RS a couple of years ago, and although it was a runner, it was in a bit of a state.

The intention was to build a boxer that evoked memories of an R90S that I'd owned, but at the same time, I wanted a little more performance in every department. I rebuilt the motor from the crank up, fitting fully overhauled Krauser four-valve heads and high-compression pistons.

For a cleaner look, the oil-cooler set-up was ditched in favour of a deep sump conversion. In keeping with the earlier bike, I fitted 40mm R90S style exhausts, and the bigger 40mm Bing carbs. Suspension was uprated with a Koni Dial-a-ride at the rear, and progressive springs up front. Braking is taken care of with the much improved Brembos and cast discs. Again, to get that cleaner, R90S look, the rather cumbersome RS full fairing was ditched in favour of the R90S cockpit fairing, and I had the bike professionally painted, the only job (other than powder coating) that I outsourced.

The end result won't be to everyone's taste, especially the purists, but in my eyes it's what I set out to achieve, and she goes, stops and handles like a much younger BMW, while still retaining buckets of character. Hope you like it!



Ray Jones' 1997 Yamaha Thundercat

Bertie, you are more elusive than the Scarlet Pimpernel, so I thought I'd try sending you a picture of my pride and joy for a second time: my 1997 Yamaha Thundercat. I would love to hear your thoughts. *CMM* is a great Mag as always!



Jerry King's 1982 GSX 1100 Katana SD

This may not be everybody's cup of tea, but I've always yearned for a Katana since I first saw one in the early 80s. Having finally gone through my Honda CBR stages I eventually purchased my first Suzuki in 2009: a 1982 GSX 1000 Katana.

I was overjoyed and loved it from day one. At the time I was not a Kat connoisseur and thought I'd bought a standard bike but soon came to realise that a few parts were not: carbs, wheels plus a few other bits had been replaced over the years. This gave me the option to play around with stuff which allowed an update to the running gear while still keeping the original overall look. The 1000 cam shafts were worn and I replaced with 1100 head, pots and cams. GSX-R 750 inverted forks with CBR9 drop-down yokes with high bars. Hagon made the extended rear shocks and a combination of these and the yokes gave me back the ride height when fitting Bandit 1200 wheels. The original swingarm was cut and then polished to take the wider wheel and a Debben offset front drive cog sorted out the chain run. Braking was improved considerably with the ZX-9R front and Bandit rear calipers. Smaller changes to indicators, extended speedometer cable, a seat recover, powder coated frame and a polished and refurbished Harris Works exhaust system finished the project... for now! Joining the Katana Owners Club UK gave me the confidence to tackle the project. It's not for the purist but I still love it to bits and it has taken me to France, the TT and regular runs around the West Midlands.



Alan Clarke's 1986 Suzuki Impulse

Greetings from West Cumbria! This is my rare 1986 Suzuki GSX400X Impulse. It was purchased at the Bonhams auction held at the Stafford Show during October 2013. It had been part of a private Dutch collection and bore Netherlands registration. It seemed it had been extensively used on a racetrack as both tyres were completely bald on the left hand side and the bike appeared to have been fuelled by 100% ethylene which had dissolved the tank liner.

Many hours had to be spent scraping the inside of the tank and endlessly flushing through before it was completely clean. Obviously all carb jets were similarly blocked. Fork seals were also completely shot but the remainder of the bike seemed useable. After also changing the oil, filter, plugs and battery, the bike fired up at the first attempt. I have since done 670km (420 miles) and it is a flying machine. Peak power is given as 59bhp at 12,000rpm so it is a bit of a screamer, with a top speed of 125mph – but I have not proved that! From what I can gather, there are no other examples of this model registered with the DVLA, so I wonder if this is the only one on British roads?



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Windows 8

Martin McGrath's 2000 Kawasaki GPz500S

I thought I'd send in some pics of my Gpz500S, which seems to be mid-ground on becoming a 'nearly classic' to a lot of people. It's on a Y-reg 2000 plate, and I'm a reasonable way to getting it back to mint condition again. It doesn't have all the gadgets of modern machines, but is a joy to ride and has taken me all over the place in comfort and will see off all but some very expensive four wheeled machinery: fantastic!



John Butler's 1983 Honda Sabre and 1985 Honda Shadow

This is Canada calling, I live in Sudbury, Ontario. I love the magazine and decided to show you my bikes. One is a 1983 Honda V45 Sabre the other is a 1985 Honda 750 Shadow. The Shadow is a bobber project while the Sabre is being kept stock. I hope you like them both. Keep up the good work with the magazine.



Simon Lund's 1999 Ducati ST4 café racer



Here are some photos of my café racer built from a Ducati ST4, which as you can see it doesn't look much like an ST4 now! As well as altering the rear sub-frame and exhaust hangers, wiring loom, moving the coils etc. (basically, everything that is hidden behind the fairing.) The tank has also had the sides cut out and new panels welded in to make it slimmer and more in-keeping with the style of bike. I've had the wheels, frame and swingarm powder coated and the paint was done by Trident Auto Bodies. I love riding the bike because of the heads it turns and the sound it makes.



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BOLD'AWE

A factory facsimile of a Honda endurance racer built on the cheap? Oh yes, it's amazing what pops up at a mini-CMM meet.

WORDS AND PHOTOS: PAUL BERRYMAN

Factory Honda racing bikes don't often turn up at the Super Sausage Café on a Saturday morning whether there's a CMM event on or not. So when Richard Jackson was the first bike into Potterspur's pukka little pitstop for a brew on our recent classic day, we were all over his bike before the wheels had even stopped turning. And the story is as unique as the bike itself...

In-depth knowledge about 1970s endurance racing may be rubbish at the average dinner party, but it proved to be pretty damn useful for Steve Dove and Richard Jackson at Badshot Lea autojumble about 10 years ago. Exactly why a factory Honda RCB1000 fairing was sitting on the grass with a price ticket of just £70 isn't clear – however, that these lifelong friends knew it needed buying was!

Their good luck continued when an RCB seat unit was found at another autojumble shortly afterwards, and also bought for peanuts. Along the way a genuine RCB mudguard also ended up in their mitts. Naturally, a plan started to form in Steve's mind about building an RCB replica.

The original plan morphed into building a CB1100R replica, based on shedloads of CB900 parts that Steve had been acquiring ("he's very effective at acquiring lots of stuff," says Richard). The bike that resulted was lethal, with a frame that had such poor welding around the headstock for an aftermarket fairing mount that it had been pulled out of true. Steve sensibly had zero appetite to ride something this dangerous, so the CB1100R replica was once again turned into a pile of bits and sat quietly gathering dust in his shed.

Come late 2009 and the threat of a garage clear-out loomed large over this cache of now unloved stuff. Steve agreed to pass the bits across into Richard's care rather than re-home them in a skip, and the RCB replica plan was reborn. The pair undertook hours of research on every piece of available reference material that revealed something interesting about these bikes – Richard picks up the story: "Once we started looking into what version of the bike to build, we realised that these bikes never raced in the same spec twice – every meeting something is different!" Arguably, this lack of defined specification gives the project builder a





headache and a dose of freedom all in one go. The Bol D'Or winning bike from 1976 was eventually decided upon as the right version to aim for.

One little gem of provenance that didn't survive the early moments of the project was the 1977 TT scrutineering sticker that their autojumble RCB fairing came with. This gives us a clue that it was from either Phil Read or Charlie Williams' TT bikes. Richard laments the moment he reduced the sticker to dust with an orbital sander while prepping the fairing for paint: "My heart sank when I realised what I'd done – it still hurts to remember that!"

This regrettable incident does, however, give us a clue as to Richard's style of project building – he really doesn't mess about. That's why this project went from a thousand separate bits into a road legal bike, which drips in handmade one-off parts, in just three months.

Richard is no stranger to tinkering with classic vehicles; his line of work means he's restored everything from a Spitfire (the flying one, not the road-going rusting one) to a Bugatti, so crafting a replica RCB1000 wasn't a task that overawed him. That it took him three months makes it sound easy, but he confesses that once he starts on a project he slaves at it tirelessly until it's done. The hours

ABOVE: First through the doors at the CMM Super Sausage event – this jaw-droppingly good RCB replica set the bar high!

INSET OPPOSITE: "I want that one!" – a garage poster kept the build on track.

OPPOSITE: Attractive and authentic looking Koso multi function tacho delivers all, idiot lights, speedo and trip.

it took to complete this work of art may have been contained within a few months, but there were very many of them – perhaps too many for good health, he admits.

If you're amazed at how quickly Richard built it, then you'll be even more amazed at how cheaply he did it, just £1200! How can a motorcycle that is this good be built for so little? Well, it's only been this cheap as hardly anything has been bought – Richard can make almost anything, make it well, and make it for buttons. Thanks to the shed corner clear-out of Steve's stockpile, which forms 75% of the bike, most of the other bits came without a price tag too.

The lack of expense and time it took to create it tells you nothing about the quality of the build. Remove any idea that this bike is a cheap lash-up, it's anything but – everything fits and works together with so much harmony that you're unlikely to think it wasn't hand-built by Honda's own race department.

In fact, ingenious touches are everywhere. Clever engineering replaces open-wallet spending and uses ingredients as diverse as flattened aluminium tubing for fairing stays, to some waste piping, bicycle inner tube and domestic sink U-bend that directs cold air from the original fairing ducts to the cylinder head. It's smart, it still manages to look right and the



The building half of the RCB's parentage, Richard Jackson. Parts provider Steve Dove avoided being in the shot and remains a man of mystery...



Oil tank level. Never goes down (it's a dummy!).

result is that lots of creativity replaces lots of pound notes. The 15,000 miles it's done since it was built without anything major going wrong are proof of the quality. This is not a garage queen; this bike gets serious use.

So what else has gone into this good-looking RCB replica? The original works fairing, seat unit and mudguard also needed a tank to complete the bodywork. With autojumbles finally failing to turn up a rare factory RCB item to use, Richard reshaped a CB900FZ tank by encasing it in expandable foam, then hand-sanding it to shape. This hybrid tank and foam sculpture was then covered in thin sheets of woven fibreglass. A light skim of filler was used to hide the weave in the fibreglass shroud before it was painted in the works colours (I told you he could make anything...). The original rear tank mount is now a dummy oil tank filler, and the original Honda fuel cap has been shrouded in an alloy cover to make it look the part. Clever.

The Comstar wheels are again from a CB900FZ, but their design originated on these RCBs in the mid-1970s and thus are more correct than you'd imagine. They wear popular, grippy-in-all-weathers Avon Roadrider tyres. The forks, brakes and swingarm are all from the CB900FZ too, as is the frame (not the lethal one on Steve's earlier build). The basic fitting together of the chassis was at least one part of the build that was straightforward!

The original shocks Richard used were too short,

and the bodywork at the rear of the bike was clouting the wheel on compression. Some new, longer shocks from CMM's Stafford show were purchased. They now work perfectly to create good geometry for both its looks and its ability to hustle: "It handles really well," Richard enthuses. "It's good enough to have shown a few more modern bikes the way on local roads." Richard doesn't brag about being a quick rider, but listening to him for any length of time makes you realise that like his project building, his riding style may well be described as 'quick.'

Setting the bike up on open CV carbs took a while, and it needed a swap from stock carbs to a bank equipped with the long-since unavailable Ledar correction kit to nail the set-up. The bike was tweaked on the Dyno at GP Performance near Oxford, where some early problems with a brick wall in the power at 6000rpm were traced to a new old stock Honda coil that had immediately failed. Replacing that saw a strong 101bhp at the back wheel, but more mysterious was the torque figure of approaching 80ft/lb, which GP Performance reckons is a good 10ft/lb higher than expected throughout most of the rev range and does sound more than a tad high to us. Richard has a theory: "Steve's collection of second-hand Honda parts was massive. It's possible that amongst everything else, he's picked up an over-bored engine that wasn't known to be such." Certainly that torque figure suggests that this isn't just a common or garden CB900



1



2

3



4



5



6

engine. Although the engine breathes out through an unrestricted homemade replica exhaust (which again is a clever piece of fabrication) and breathes in through open carbs, it's more likely that the extra torque will have come from bigger cubic capacity than those modifications.

Whatever cc it is packing, it now runs well. Tests on private roads/autobahn (ahem) reveal it's got a top speed of around 140mph. One of the bigger tests it faced was one of those rare hot days this summer during a long-awaited pilgrimage to Spa, as Richard explains: "The return journey had to be made through Brussels after the ring road was closed. It was 38 degrees Celsius and stiflingly hot, with miles of slow moving traffic." Air-cooled, this is the worst kind of combination for the big CB engine, but to its credit it hiccupped rather than vomited when faced with the task.

"The oil temperature went up to 150 degrees, 50 degrees more than usual and it refused to tickover. I had to wind the tickover up to get through the problem, which was a horrible solution. Even when back on the open road it was such a hot day that the oil temperature remained at 130 degrees, but it ran okay once it was a little cooler and it got us home."

Mechanically then, is there anything left to do to it? "The clutch isn't always 100% perfect, it slips from cold sometimes and owners of tweaked CB engines recommend taking 0.2mm off each clutch steel plate, which reduces the stack height enough to use one more steel and one more plate, increasing clutch surface area. I've tried heavier springs and they were no better than the stock ones."

Aside from that there's little to do. Richard has some AP Lockheed calipers on the shopping list, which were used on the original RCB, a bigger oil cooler to help stabilise the temperature on super-hot days like the Belgian traffic jam, and he covets the idea of a more comfortable seat pad: "200 miles is the limit on that seat," he says, which doesn't sound bad, but then he describes the last of those 100 miles as being 'torture', which sounds to us like the seat has an actual 100-mile limit!

Will he ever sell it? It seems I've asked the killer

question. A flicker of pain and then a flicker of possibility dance across his expression. "I don't know, I suppose I would, but the money would need to be enough for me to do something else, like another project?"

Asking what that may be, the answer is instant and it appears that the next project apple would fall from the same tree as this one! "I'd love to make a Goudier Genoud Kawasaki Replica." (That's another Seventies endurance racer to those who are not in the know.)

When he asks me what I think this project is worth, it's clear he's never really thought long or hard about it before. When I tell him what I think, which is a LOT more than £1200, he seems surprised and chuffed.

I simply can't do this bike justice in the amount of space this article allows. I've skimmed across the surface of the genius and magic that has gone into it. This bike not only has a lovely story, but has had a very clever man build it.

If you want an example of hand-built exotic luxury in your garage, go make him an offer – this bike is exactly that. I've seen much less appealing builds than this with asking prices over £10k, and while I'm not going to tell you what I think he'd take for it, I will tell you that it's less than that, and it'd be a bargain.

Why do I want him to sell it? That's easy – I am gagging to see what he comes up with next. Top job Richard! **cmm**

IN DETAIL:

1/ Night racing heritage means the genuine RCB seat unit had quick battery access and lights already built in.

2/ Twin Cibies – one for low beam, one for high, no daytime MoT needed.

3/ Shocks from CMM's Stafford show may be unbranded and ridiculously good value, but they work just great.

4/ Open CV carbs can be a pain, but with Ledar air correction kits these are sweet running at anything less than ridiculous ambient temperature.

5/ Shrouded in an aluminium cover the OE fuel cap mimics the endurance look. Clever.

6/ RSC morphed into HRC around the early 1980's – either means just one thing "factory".

A RIGHT LITTLE MAVERICK

WORDS AND PHOTOS: ANDY WESTLAKE

The Sixties and Seventies were all about a new brand of freedom for the youngsters of the time, and few summed up that freedom more than the little Suzuki AS50.





'Performance and economy from this new Japanese tiddler,' was the headline that greeted the readers when Suzuki's newly launched AS50 was put through its paces by *Motorcycle Mechanics* in November 1969.

The tester waxed lyrically about the little two-stroke's glamorous specification that included flashing indicators, neutral indicator to the five-speed gearbox and a rotary valve high performance engine with 'Posiforce' lubrication. Racing had certainly improved the breed and following Ernst Degner's defection from MZ in September 1961 Suzuki won numerous world road race championships with their multi-gear lightweights, and as was pointed out in the MM test much of this know-how had found its way onto the Hamamatsu company's range of fast and superbly styled road bikes. Degner had scooped its first world crown on the 50 in 1962 and the following year – which saw New Zealand factory star Hugh Anderson win both the 50 and 125cc titles – the Suzuki range arrived in the UK.

Ironically, these were initially handled by AMC (Associated Motorcycles) the manufacturers of AJS, Matchless, Norton, Francis Barnett and James who, within three years, would fold under the weight of the Japanese invasion. With the likes of Degner and Anderson 'winning on Sunday' there was no shortage of 'buyers on Monday' and with Alan Kimber at the helm some 18,000 Suzukis were shipped in and out of the back door of the James factory in Golden Hillock Road at Greet in Birmingham in the first year alone. These comprised of a trio of 50s, the M12, M15 and MD 15D, the 80 and K10 plus the T10 250 twin, but the vast majority to find British owners in that first 12-month period were the K and M singles that featured in full-page adverts in the motorcycling weeklies under the headlines '50cc

motorcycles for the young and the young at heart'. Other than the introduction of the M15D 'Sovereign' in 1964 – at the time the only 50cc motorcycle on the British market to feature an electric start and described by *Motor Cycling* as having 'a standard specification which is lavish even by Japanese standards' – there was little change to the base M12 Sportsman and Super Sport models until the new 'A' range was launched in 1967.

Initially, as the 98cc A100 the new bike featured a near-horizontal cylinder with race-bred disc-valve induction mounted on the offside of the crankcase and with its 'Posiforce' oil injection it brought an air of civilisation to the lightweight sector of the market.

The following year a smaller 50cc five-speed version with the same disc-valve induction running a compression ratio of ratio of 6.7:1 and turning out a useful 4.9bhp at 8500 rpm hit the showrooms and unsurprisingly there was no shortage of teenagers eager to get their hands on one of the 60mph two-stroke singles. In its sporty AS50 guise – Maverick in the USA – the little Suzuki only lasted until the end of 1970, but over that decade numerous other versions were built, including the A50, the AC50 (like the AS50 with raised exhaust, abbreviated chainguard and either exposed springs or gaitered forks), the A50P (P for pedals) and A50K (a restricted performance motorcycle) along with the A70 (as A50 but with four speeds), the A80 and A90 versions plus sports variants like the AC90, AC90G, AS90 and AS90G.

This stunningly restored AS50 – now owned by enthusiast Gerald Fewkes – rolled off the Hamamatsu production lines in 1970 but with only a little over 6000 miles showing on the odometer it's obviously had a fairly sheltered life. In its AS guise it's considered by many aficionados to be the prettiest of all of the Suzuki 50s and as it was only



in production for three years it now falls into the category of hen's teeth. It was brought back to life by Gary Beevers – a man who is well known in the car world for his top quality work – and arrived in its new Wiltshire home in February this year where it now shares garage space with a brace of Kawasaki triples, a Hinckley Triumph and the rare USA model 125cc F6 we featured in April's edition of the magazine. Gary takes up the story: "I've always loved the styling of those late Sixties Suzuki 50s and when I saw this one advertised I knew it was too good an opportunity to miss.

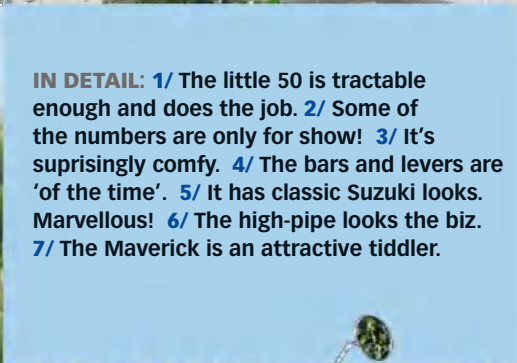
"Somewhere along the line it had lost its original registration so I know little or nothing about its previous life before Gary bought it in early 2014 but it was reputed to have been once owned by the former racer and Suzuki enthusiast Don Leeson. Sadly, Don was killed while racing in the 2005 Classic Manx Grand Prix so with no old V5 or original registration number I haven't been able to substantiate that.

"I understand that prior to its restoration the little bike was looking a bit rough but was complete with no major components missing making it the perfect restoration project. The front mudguard and the wheel rims were both badly rusted and these had to be replaced but the engine was still on the standard bore and discovered to be in perfect condition. With it stripped to the last nut and bolt Gary resprayed all of the tinware in candy blue and silver grey two-pack and while he was attending to this all of the bright bits including the bars, kick-start, indicator stems,

"Like any two-stroke, the oomph is at the top end of the revs, but it's tractable enough to purr along in top at 30mph."

fork legs, exhaust and silencer were farmed out and treated to a new layer of chrome. The wheels were re-spoked and a new set of control cables fitted, the petrol taps and the seat are the originals, as are the tank rubbers but these are a little bit tatty and I'm presently trying to locate a new set. The only jobs I've had to do to bring it back to 'pukka' 1970 specification is to fit a set of original switches (Gary had used those from a slightly later AP50), change the mirrors and get some correct gear rubbers."

Unlike the original Mechanics test that took place in the depths of mid-winter in 1969 we were blessed with a scorching hot late summer's day to put the AS through its paces. However, before we fire the eager little two-stroke into action we'll briefly reflect on some of the words written about its sibling five decades ago: 'Racing develops the breed and these words cannot possibly ring more true than in the case of the new ultra-lightweight AS 50 Suzuki. When Hugh Anderson was out shattering the opposition on the works racing 50 Suzuki with its top speed of over 100mph to win the world road racing championship the boffins in Japan must have been making careful notes for the development of their roadsters... Similar to most sports two-strokes the power from the Suzuki motor is at the top end of the rev band and if full use is made of the five speeds in the gearbox some amazing average speeds can be maintained with this ultra-lightweight machine. However, although the engine must be kept buzzing to obtain any real performance, this does not mean that the bike isn't tractable.



SPECIFICATION

SUZUKI AS50

ENGINE

Air-cooled single cylinder two-stroke with disc valve induction, alloy head and barrel

BORE X STROKE

41mm x 37.8mm

CAPACITY

49.9cc

COMP RATIO

6.7:1

POWER OUTPUT

4.9 BHP @ 8500rpm

LUBRICATION

Pump

IGNITION

Flywheel magneto

CARBURETTOR

VM 16 SC

PRIMARY DRIVE

Gears

FINAL DRIVE

Chain

GEARBOX

5-speed

FRAME

Pressed steel construction

SUSPENSION

Front: Telescopic fork
Rear: Swinging arm with twin shocks

BRAKES

Front: 110mm full width single leading shoe
Rear: 110mm full width single leading shoe

TYRES

2.25 x 17 front and rear

WHEELBASE

45.7 inches (1,160mm)

GROUND CLEARANCE

5.9 inches (150mm)

SEAT HEIGHT

26.8 inches (681mm)

FUEL TANK CAPACITY

1.5 gallons (6.5 litres)

DRY WEIGHT

160lbs (72.5kg)

TOP SPEED

60mph (96.5kph)

PRICE NEW (1970)

£129 19s 6d – inc. purchase tax

IN DETAIL: 1/ The little 50 is tractable enough and does the job. 2/ Some of the numbers are only for show! 3/ It's surprisingly comfy. 4/ The bars and levers are 'of the time'. 5/ It has classic Suzuki looks. Marvellous! 6/ The high-pipe looks the biz. 7/ The Maverick is an attractive tiddler.



It will happily purr along in top gear at 30mph and slowly accelerate to its maximum of almost 60mph. It will pobble along happily at low revs as a ride to work mount with fuel consumption in the 140mpg bracket, or, if the gas taps are opened wide the exhaust note becomes rather noisy at about 5000rpm and quickly buzzes to 8500 before it runs out of breath – under this type of riding the fuel consumption drops to 90 – 95mpg.’

As Gerald had promised, starting the 50cc single was one of the easiest operations imaginable and with the ignition on half a prod of the kick-start had the engine singing into life. For our test ride through the Wiltshire lanes there were no thoughts about trying to search for the AS top speed of 60mph but just blipping the light throttle at a standstill brought a purposeful ‘zing’ through the long upswept silencer, a note which instantly transported me back to the days of my youth when ear-splitting strokers ruled the world’s racetracks. Despite its small capacity engine the AS50 – which weighs in at 160 lbs (72.5kg) – has the feel of a larger capacity machine but with a fairly tall first gear plenty of revs have to dialled in to get things moving. However,



“With a willing motor, good handling and braking and up to 140mpg, it’s a practical machine and Gerald is right: it’s pretty too!”

ABOVE: Owner Gerald Fewkes.

BELOW: She can still cut it today!

once under way the rotary valve engine – designed along with its porting to soften and spread the characteristics of the power band – really came into its own and it was all too easy to see why the MM tester waxed so lyrically about the suitability of the little Suzuki as the perfect ‘ride to work’ machine.

It was also complimentary about the handling and braking, although they were somewhat more circumspect about the narrow section Japanese tyres the AS came shod with: ‘Handling for the performance available is good, although the dampers could be better on front and rear for really bumpy roads (There is no adjustment on the rear twin shocks). Braking is well up to standard and copes easily with the weight of the machine from any speed. However, the narrow section Japanese tyres, although satisfactory in the dry, felt a little skittish in the wet and care was necessary to avoid skidding.’

How writing styles have changed! With six volt direct lighting – the battery reserved for the ignition, brake light and indicators – the tester wasn’t overly impressed with the headlamp or the fact that with just a single seat and no pillion footrests there was no provision to carry a passenger – but overall the reviewer had plenty to enthuse over and closed by saying: ‘... but when it comes to playing tunes on the five-speed gearbox and manoeuvring through London traffic it’s delightful. It’s aimed at the youngster who wants a sporty looking, economical lightweight and it succeeds!’

There’s no doubt Gerald was 100% correct when he described the AS50 as being Suzuki’s prettiest ever 50 and it’s one I would be only too glad to add to the Westlake garage. **cmm**



Timeline of UK Suzuki 50s during the 1960s and 1970s

MODEL	YEAR	VARIATION
M15	1963 – 1967	50cc version of K10, no frame brace, leading link forks, Mark 2 version with telescopic
M15D	1963 – 1967	As M15 with electric start and 12 volt system
M30	1963 – 1965	Step thru, 3 speeds, automatic clutch, leading link forks, tank on frame supporting seat
M12	1963 – 1967	50cc version of K11, no frame brace
US50	1966 – 1968	Step thru as M30
AS50/Maverick	1968 – 1970	As AC50
A50	1969 – 1976	Horizontal cylinder, disc valve, low exhaust on right, 5 speeds, spine frame
GA50		A50 with engine protection bars
K50		Utility version of A50 with reed valve and 4 speeds
KS50		K50 with raised exhaust
AC50	1969 – 1976	Modified A50, raised exhaust on left
A50K		Restricted A50 for UK
A50P	1975 – 1977	A50 with pedals for UK
K50	1967 – 1976	
F50/Cutlass	1969 – 1976	Step thru, leading link forks, reed valve engine, enclosed fuel tank separate rear mudguard, chaincase, one piece leg-shield
FR50		As F50 except rear mudguard part of frame
TS50	1971 – 1976	Trail model with A50 engine, tubular spine frame, exhaust low and sloping up on right
M50		Moped, 2 speeds, trailing link front forks
MT50	1971 – 1973	Mini bike with 3 speeds, spine frame, chunky 8 inch tyres, pressed steel wheels
RV50	1973 – 1976	All-terrain model with spine frame, fat tyres, pressed steel wheels



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Ho ho ho! It's that time of year when rosy-cheeked rotund men, like myself, bestow gifts to all.

Christmas is all about bringing people, family, friends and sprouts together. So, what could be a finer gift to you oily-fingered lot, than bringing all your favourite motorcycle magazines together in one place.

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editor

* Any views and delusions expressed are strictly those of the editor... but he's right, CMM is a damn good read.

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Super Stafford!

the 22nd Carole Nash classic motorcycle mechanics show

Stafford October 17-18

You came, you saw and Bertie bought a mug. If you weren't there, you missed a stunning event, so take a gander at this snapshot of the show and book in time for next year.

WORDS: BERTIE SIMMONDS
 PICS: JOE DICK, BERTIE SIMMONDS

It was a great weekend packed full of the best retrospective action on two wheels, proving that for many the annual Carole Nash Classic Motorcycle Mechanics Show is the highlight of the year.

This year's event was packed to the rafters with superstars, bargain bikes, burgers, butties, hungry bikers and hounds needing a home. My favourite hound was a sorry looking Yamaha XJ650 'Turbo' which was described as a very good runner with MoT, complete with a puddle of oil underneath it. We won't even mention the knackered Kawasaki KR-1 that had seen better decades that was advertised for £1700...

For me, it was about touching base with the owners club associated with my latest project (see page 78) and purchasing a mug from them: now that's what I call grass-roots support. The GPz900R Owners Club sums up many of the clubs that attend the show. They are just a good bunch of blokes (and ladies) who love the classic Jap motorcycle scene and who have a great weekend manning their stand.

The big news was that the Bonham's auction hit a European record £3.6 million. Of interest to *CMM* readers was that the 1971 Münch TTS 'Mammoth' featured in our October issue went for double its top estimate – £85,500! The big earners were three

Brough Superiors selling for a combined total of £704,500. A complete Olympia Motorcycle Show 1937 Brough Superior 990cc SS100 went for £208,700, while a pair of Brough Superior 981cc SS100 Alpine Grand Sport projects reached £236,700 and £259,100 respectively: big dollar for such important Brit-bike icons. The star lots made a substantial contribution to the total weekend figure for machines sold, an all-time high for Bonham's' annual October event and the highest grossing motorcycle sale to ever take place in Europe. Other interesting lots included an ex-Steve McQueen 1934 Indian 750cc Sport Scout – £59,740 – and a former TT 1932 Rudge 350cc Works Racing Motorcycle which attracted fevered bidding to see it realise more than seven times its top estimate – £70,940! The money is out there, folks!

Former Top Gear host James May added a celebrity element to the auction room as he turned up to see four examples from his own collection go under the hammer. Top lot for Captain Slow was his 1967 Honda CB450 'Black Bomber' which sold for £5980. He wasn't the only star at Stafford as four times Formula 1 world champion Sebastian Vettel was among the crowd during the auction.

Of course the star name at the show was John McGuinness and what a popular one he was. The 23 times TT race winner appeared on stage several times throughout the weekend being interviewed by



fellow road-racer and TV host Steve Plater. John said: "I just love bikes. If I wasn't a racer I'd still be a huge fan. Coming to events such as this one and talking to people about our bikes... I love it!"

Addressing packed crowds, John covered topics including his plans for next season's racing, his own personal collection of machines, his fellow competitors and team-mates and what's left on his career wish list. He revealed that he'd just signed a contract for an 11th consecutive year with Honda, and will be competing at the North West 200 and TT in 2016. The Morecambe missile said that thoughts of retirement are far from his mind and that he wants to win a Classic TT before he hangs up his helmet.

Sei sizzled as all the odds and sods of Stafford came to the fore. TT replica wood statue was amazing. BELOW: Bert's mad mates of Sunday's final cavalcade.

Annette Jones was the lucky winner of 'Lunch with John McGuinness' and along with her husband she spent plenty of time with him in the VIP hospitality lounge. They were joined by Steve Plater and John 'Mooneyes' Cooper. Annette said: "I was so excited to be selected as the winner of the lunch with John McGuinness competition, and to have met so many other famous motorcycling names makes it even better." Classic Bike Shows exhibition manager Nick Mowbray said: "John has been one of our most popular ever guests of honour; everyone we've spoken to at the show has nothing but respect for him and the queues waiting to meet him were some of the biggest we've seen." As well as appearances from McGuinness, John Cooper, Sammy Miller, Jim Redman and Colin Seeley were among the famous motorcycle names to grace the venue.

As usual there was also the rather important judging for 'Best in Show'. This honour fell to a rare-to-the-UK 1968 Suzuki T305. The model, which was only produced for American markets, was brought to the UK by current owner Paul Cann last year. He's since used specialist suppliers and service providers to restore it to pristine condition; his project being rewarded with the highly sought after honour, a trophy and £100 first prize. Paul said: "I've always been interested in bikes that are a little bit different, and with this particular Suzuki having never been sold in the UK it does get a lot of attention when displayed here. I'll exhibit it at the classic bike show in Somerset in February, and





then it'll be retired to my garage. I'm sure the next project won't be too far behind."

It was also a successful event for our friends from the Kettle Club, with the Suzuki GT750 enthusiast group claiming the Best Club Stand award. A variety of models were on display, but it was the 1970s disco and tie-dye theme which really caught the eye; exhibitors on the stand even dressing up in some instantly recognisable 70s apparel! Kettle Club committee member David Hewitson said: "The GT750 was launched in 1971, and we had several bikes on the stand from the decade. Our 'theme' pretty much decided itself! We've signed up 16 new members this weekend, and we've had many, many more people take away application forms. Claiming the £1000 Best Club Stand award is the icing on the cake."

The club also drew attention to the stand with a fully functional GT750 engine controlled by microprocessors, and a smoke machine to evoke the nostalgic feel of the two-stroke machine. David said: "We're particularly proud of the engine, which has taken us years of painstaking work to put together. It's been a real draw for visitors, so it's all been worthwhile."

We also want to thank those that lent us their pride and joy for our stand, which included Niall Mackenzie's Pro-Am winning 1981 Yamaha RD250LC, Steve Parrish's 1985 Loctite Yamaha FZ750, Pete Eaton's 1989 Kawasaki ZXR750, Joe

It was all on display: Leaky XJs, rusting runabouts and a tight-fisted editor about to make a mug of himself with the GPZ Owners Club.



Walker's 1977 Van Veen OCR1000, Ian Green's 1985 Yamaha RD350 YPVS F1 and Jay McGreneghan with his Kawasaki GPZ900R which you can win if you go to: www.raffleplayer.com/strokekawasaki.

Other mentions must go to the brave fools who joined me on the cavalcade, including the hardy souls who were there on Sunday afternoon. These included Cliff Lawson on his 1953 BSA B31 (a lesser chrome model/more rust model) which he has owned for seven years most of which was spent in a bramble bush (we kid you not.) Stuart Price and his lovely Bridgestone, Mike Pemberton of Push-Rod Performance and his Norton Supermoto (he builds his own crank and barrels. It's a 499cc 1962 machine and it revs to 7500rpm...). Then there was Frank Barnard on his rather mad Honda Express Deluxe and Ken Baxter with the Brough Superior SS80 from 1938 which he's owned it for 30 years which he declares is 'part of the family'.

Exhibition manager Nick Mowbray said: "Across all areas, this has to go down as one of the most successful Stafford shows ever. A record-breaking auction and increased attendance figures certainly demonstrate that. Most important though, our exhibitors and showgoers gave us fantastic feedback, and are going home happy. Now the bar has been set even higher for next year, so we'd best start thinking about how we can top it once again." **cmm**

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ROTARY REVISIONIST

WORDS: STEVE COOPER PHOTOS: GARY CHAPMAN

Are Suzuki's rotaries really a load of old rubbish?
Or is there a lot to love about the RE5?

It's a generally accepted truism that history is written by the victors. While this might be a cliché there's also an inarguable reality to it.

Every single time a nation, tribe or culture has taken a pasting it's never really been able to tell its own story properly. Subsequent generations always get to read about the winner's side of things. We hear how William of Normandy won the day by countless brave assaults and someone's needlework allows us to see King Harold's boys taking a right old kicking. What a shame we don't have access to the home team's notes. They'd probably have read – 'we'd have won if we hadn't been knackered from a ruck last week and all that walking down the A1!' The same goes for certain motorcycles; the odd, strange, misunderstood or different generally get very seriously maligned and the classic press often tend to perpetuate the lies.

Kawasaki H1s will try to kill you, everyone should own a Yamaha LC350, Honda Pro-Link CBX 6s are a pale facsimile of the real thing and Suzuki RE5s are poison. Well, in a furore of early 21st century, apologist and revisionist text we're going to attempt to set the record straight on a seriously slandered, libelled yet revolutionary machine.

Suzuki had always been a brave and forward thinking organisation; examples of its abilities abound if you look: hydraulic brakes on the T10s (1962), a six-speed gearbox on the T20 (1965), a parallel 500cc stroker twin (1968) and dual ratio boxes on the early dirt bikes. None of this was conventional or orthodox back then yet the very fact that these and other innovations were produced and became commercial realities underscored the company's ability to do something back in the day that was special – think outside the box. And this month's subject matter is a perfect example or case study. Suzuki seems to have drawn a veil over the RE5's development but fortunately there's still sufficient information out there for us to begin to appreciate just how much work went into that one bike.

The company knew just how arduous the job was going to be. It was aware that the engine had its own particular foibles and technical demands. Knowing

how important this project was Shigeyusa Kamiya was elevated to the role of head of Suzuki's rotary division and created a team that took the engine way beyond what many competitors were doing.

Arch European proponent of the Wankel NSU had experienced rotor tip sealing issues throughout both prototype and production stages of manufacture. This was the rotary engine's equivalent of piston ring blow-by. Because material science was substantially less advanced back then Kamiya's team found itself at the forefront of metal/ceramic hybrid technology.

No one had done anything like this before and Suzuki's scientists and engineers eventually came up with an electro-chemical plating process that used nickel-silicon carbide to give a corrosion resistant and diamond hard coating to the combustion chamber. To ensure consistent and reliable compression the coating had to be accurate to within 1/1000th mm or one single micron. Every single trochoid combustion chamber was physically inspected under X-ray micro-analysis to ensure the plating's metallurgical structure was uniform, consistent and all lying in the correct direction.

The mechanical sealing tip of the rotor presented its own unique challenges which the team yet again addressed. Using a material Suzuki called Ferro-Tic, based on a ferrous/titanium carbide alloy, it provided an anti-wear surface 12 times more resilient than cast iron; the primary alloy of normal piston rings. We tend to think of motorcycle designers as engineers but on the RE5 a lot of the groundwork was chemistry and applied physics, this was not a conventional engine by any stretch of the imagination.

If the basic power unit was sorted the challenges had by no means ended. Carburation presented its own unique issues; cooling would remain an inherent bugbear of the basic Wankel design, lubrication required two separate sources of oil and then there were other concerns few at Suzuki could have imagined. The CDI would have to be driven off two individual cams/triggers to overcome chain snatch, exhausts necessitated twin walled construction throughout their length and given their own cooling ducts. These and numerous other solutions to problems no one ever imagined meant the bike rapidly put on weight. ➡



1



2

IN DETAIL:

1/ This was 1970s technology with added schmaltz. 2/ Exhaust pipes have their own ventilation system. 3/ Round, circular, rotary: in case you missed the point. 4/ Specifically positioned to resist chain snatch. 5/ Brakes blagged from contemporary Kettles. 6/ This was seen as the future in the mid-1970s.



3



4



5

"Shigeyusa Kamiya was made head of Suzuki's rotary division and automotive stylist Giorgetto Giugiaro is said to be responsible for the RE5's detailing."



6

The ride

If you've never got up close and personal with an RE5 I suggest you try it; the whole thing is a lesson in packing the largest amount of components into the smallest space. It's a fairly substantial structure by anyone's standards and the more you look the more you see. Against the contemporary Hercules W2000 the Suzuki is massive and it seems that every square millimetre of space has something in it.

Pipes and cast alloy, filters and casings, wiring, fans and radiators – there's just so much going on here it's almost sensory overload. Take a few steps back and soak up those lines, absorb the styling, study the subtle nuances. The shock absorbers are fitted at a strange angle; almost vertical and more akin to an early postwar British bike than a 1970s technological marvel.

Of course there's a sound reason for the set-up. Apparently Suzuki found that, within reason, the nearer to vertical the suspension units were the less likely the bike was to adversely react to chain snatch on the overrun. Our bike is one of the first M models and carried with it Suzuki's hopes and aspirations, therefore little on it is restrained or muted.

Automotive stylist Giorgetto Giugiaro is said to be partially responsible for the RE5's detailing and this is probably best seen in some of the more ostentatious peripherals. Those spherical indicators are unique to the bike, ditto the rear light and much vaunted instrument binnacle. Even the headlamp shell is overtly circular thereby implying the theme of rotary motion.

Elsewhere and beyond the obviously RE5 specific frame and exhausts there's a large amount of GT750 components. With so much investment in



the engine and its peripherals Suzuki needed to cut costs wherever possible. In an ideal world possibly everything would have been exclusive to the bike, RE5 specific, but the pillaging of the triple's parts bins arguably gave the rotary a slightly ambiguous rather than unique look.

Okay, enough prodding and poking, let's get the show on the road. The fuel tap is vacuum operated so nothing to do there. Turn on the ignition and the clocks do their party piece and raise their semi-circular cover... neat. Starting the motor requires nothing more than a couple of stabs on the button before the most unusual exhaust note emanates from those silencers.

Even now you can almost imagine the faces of the Suzuki engineers the first time the prototype fired up. Makes you wonder what the Japanese is for "bloody hell, I wasn't expecting that!" Nothing else sounds like an RE5. At this juncture we should point out that although the bike does have a kick-starter it's effectively pointless. Such are the internal resistances and compression that it's normally impossible to kick start the engine into life and if you can the chances are the rotor tip seals are shot to hell.

Throwing a leg over the bike is fairly straightforward but getting it off the stand is anything but; it almost feels like someone has bolted it to the floor, You'll need to be standing beside it ready to heave and hope it doesn't fall over or run away with you because the C of G is high and the bike is no lightweight. If you've an ounce of common sense you will never run out of fuel on an RE5 either as you won't be able to push it to a petrol station. So we're on board and it's truly a weird sensation as the bike gets under way.

Fortunately some of the mass falls away above walking pace and once again you sense you're getting substantially more than your money's worth but this time it's the ear that cops it. There's a strange 'wobba, wobba, wobba' from the exhaust as the bike picks up speed and then when you come back on a neutral throttle the sound changes to a continuous drone. Think air compressor or industrial floor cleaner.

The engine demands choke longer than you might expect but then there's a phenomenal amount of metal to get up to temperature. However, within three miles the temperature gauge has moved to the middle. And within another mile or so the blighter ➡

SPECIFICATION

SUZUKI RE5 ROTARY

CONFIGURATION

Liquid/oil-cooled, single rotary housing

DISPLACEMENT

498cc

GEARBOX

5 speed (1D-4U)

BORE X STROKE

61mm x 59.6mm

COMPRESSION RATIO

9.4:1

MAX HP

62bhp @ 6500rpm

MAX TORQUE

55lb-ft @ 3500rpm

DRY WEIGHT

507lb (230kg)

TYRES

3.25 19in (F) / 4.50 18in (R)



"There is something so very special about the way a Wankel engine delivers the goods."



is getting towards HOT where it hovers throughout our ride with no apparent ill effects.

As we get out of suburbia the RE continues to amaze and impress. There's an astonishing amount of torque on hand; riding it quickly becomes addictive. However, with no sense of engine speed and zero vibration you'll need to keep a weather eye on the tachometer or you'll be in the red... a lot! Electric bikes may very well feel like this now but back in the day this was nothing short of sensational. I can only begin to imagine just how different the rotary Norton racers must have felt; the likes of Ian Simpson, Phil Borley, Steve Hislop, Jim Moodie, Trevor Nation and Steve Spray must have huge grins on their faces when they weren't being scared witless by the unique power characteristics.

Make no mistake there is something special about the way a Wankel engine delivers the goods. Every cynical, gnarly old hack who has ridden one seems to come up with their own analogy so I guess I'll have to maintain this curious tradition. Think super smooth two-stroke multi way beyond the best GT750 but then throw in the torque of a feisty Suzuki RM500 moto-crosser. Yes, that'd just about do it.

With far too much to take on board all at once other, initially, less obvious facets of the bike begin to come into focus. The 'chugga, chugga

Beauty's in the eye of the beholder but Scoop is smitten.

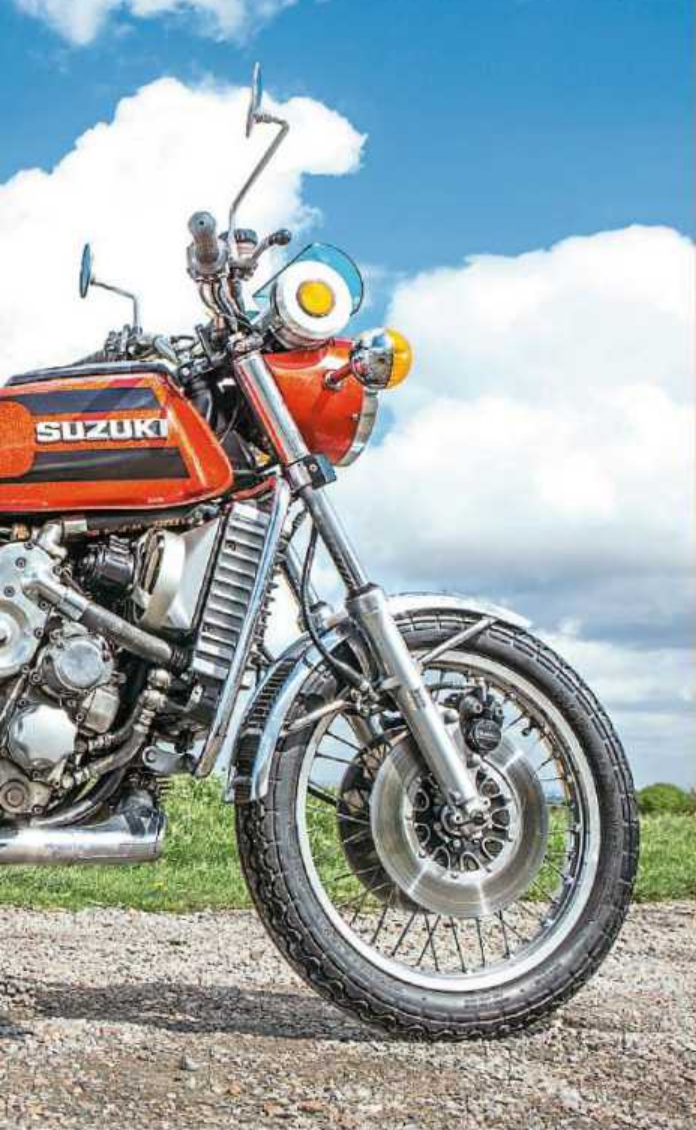
chugga' on the overrun followed by that addictive 'wobba, wobba, wobba' note as you accelerate. The signature Suzuki gear indicator; on the RE5 it's truly a godsend as you need as much help as you can get. About the only obvious negative is the Suzuki GT750 donated gearbox which makes a crunch both in and out of first. Perhaps the huge amount of torque available from virtually tick over just overwhelms the clutch when stationary or at the lowest speeds?

Suzuki's chassis team were canny with the RE. The saddle is firm without being hard which gives you the impression of being above the traffic. And you get a real 'King of the Road' feel from the upright and fairly wide bars which somehow conveys a level of innate quality or even gentlemanly superiority which is both strange and rather oddly smugly satisfying. How the hell does that work? Against logic, the foot pegs are further back than you might expect. If their positioning feels, initially, at odds with the seat and bars it soon makes sense and ultimately makes for a comfortable ride.

What soon begins to become apparent is that the RE5 is extremely well thought out as a complete package. The bike feels well planted for a chassis drawn up in circa 1974. It's entirely predictable with no unexpected lurches or wobbles and for a fairly chunky monkey the bike can be flipped from side to side with surprising ease.

I'm circulating a roundabout so photographer Gary can get some interesting shots and having to look out for the inevitable muppets who cannot spot the leviathan combination of candy orange bike and red





The case for the rotary engine and its history

The case for a rotary engine is as convincing as its execution is vexatious. Theory, common sense and logic all argue a reciprocating piston engine is fundamentally flawed. Taking energy/fuel to accelerate a piston, stop it and then move it again is not the best use of a finite resource. Swapping to rotary motion makes so much sense on paper; whatever it is you're moving remains in motion so you're not squandering energy. Appreciate that the reciprocating piston has its roots in Thomas Savery's steam pump of 1698 and you begin to see why someone might think it was time for a change.

When Dr Felix Wankel began selling patents and licences for his revolutionary engine in mid 1960s he'd already undertaken a huge amount of research. The cynics might suggest that the canny doctor knew just how much investment would be needed to produce a commercially viable power unit and effectively passed the buck while grabbing the loot.

The reality was that pretty much every major automotive manufacturer bought into the concept. From the American car giants right the way down to Iron Curtain MZ all wanted a slice of the pie. BSA bought in a German made Fitchel & Sachs engine and dropped it into a B series frame; this prototype would go on to become the famous twin rotor Norton. Car manufacturer NSU got in on the ground floor but had the rug pulled out from under it when it was bought by VW/Audi which swiftly ended production of the RO80.

DKW aka Hercules used a unit similar to BSA's to produce the W2000 but variable build quality and a poor reception ended any long term potential. Yamaha built a prototype but never put it into production. Kawasaki is believed to have dabbled but allegedly Honda remained aloof from the supposed charms of the Wankel engine. In the bike world it was Norton that made the best job with automotive giant Mazda keeping the faith until 2011 with their RX car series which was only to due updated emissions regulation.

If only the Wankel engine had received a similar level of research and technological input as the piston engine our biking world might have been very different. Ten years ago everyone scoffed at electric bikes and now we have a zero emissions TT with phenomenal lap times for an emergent technology. Perhaps if the RE5 had received similar levels of spin (sic) sufficient funding might delivered a second viable alternative to the all-pervasive four stroke piston engine.

jacketed rotund rider. Just a touch of input via pegs, knees or bars has the Wankel moving just where I want it to be out of harm's way.

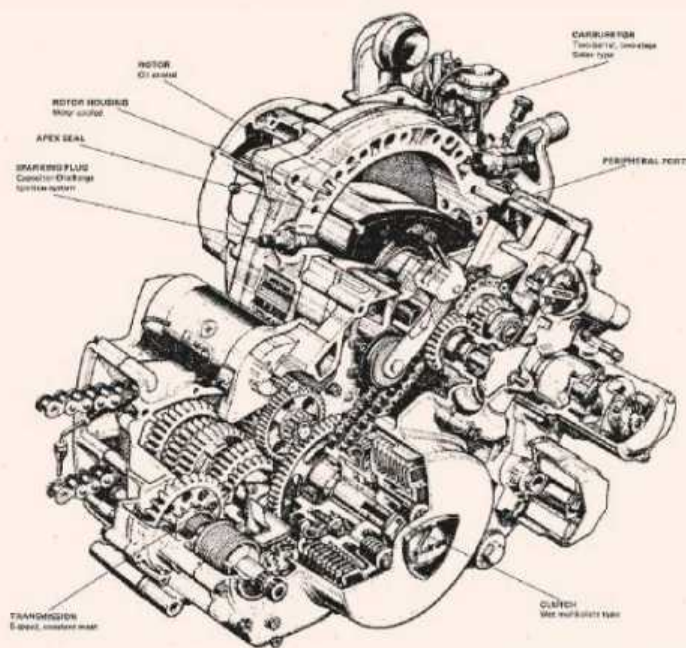
The front brakes are good but in deference to the inevitable diesel spill I rely mainly on that rotor's compression and a judicious feathering of rear brake as and when. We're then off to a new location and as I accelerate away the RE fairly leaps at the chance to stretch its legs. There's not a cough or stutter from the engine underlining just how well sorted the fuelling is. I've ridden more conventional bikes that are infinitely more finicky and diva like.

Conclusion

Okay let's get the negatives out of the way first. A Suzuki RE5 is not the sort of bike you should buy on a whim. Only around 150 were officially imported into the UK and many of them are now probably cosmetically dog rough and falling apart. USA imports turn up but are often missing parts. Setting up or fault finding an RE requires a fresh approach and an open mind.

The bike is heavy on fuel, there are two oil systems to consider, you'll need a spark plug converter insert as the OEM plug has long been deleted, oh, and today you'll be looking at oil filters from a car apparently as again Suzuki no longer offers the original. Rotary Recycle, the one company offering a comprehensive collection of service items, used parts and technological updates has ceased trading too, so things don't look so rosy: no, not exactly the most encouraging of situations.

On the plus side owners of the RE5 are



SUZUKI ROTARY ENGINE: LICENSED BY FELIX WANKEL



The acquisition of an RE5



RE5 owner Dave Jupp may well be familiar to *CMM* readers. He's one of our favourite mechanics and lender of test machines for road tests. Having owned pretty much everything from singles through to Kawasaki triples and early Honda fours you'd think he'd covered all the bases. However, the RE5 is the only bike he has ever actively pursued.

The pre VJMC grapevine located the RE5 at Monty & Ward in Edenbridge back in the very early 1980s. Dave was already a fairly seasoned restorer and explained to Mr Monty that he wanted an RE5 to restore... which was a pretty weird ask back then by anyone's standards. Sitting at the back of the shop was a scruffy RE5 complete with GT750 wheels, bent forks, rough paint but, crucially, a running engine.

A deal was done with some cash plus a p/x on a Yamaha RD250 and Dave became the owner of an RE5 when pretty much no one wanted them. In the deal came some free parts, a new battery, a new rear guard and new headlamp shell which were all in stock as Monty & Ward had been official RE5 dealers. Can you imagine a dealer handing over any NOS free of charge today?

With a bike to work on Dave splashed out on a new front mudguard, a pair of second hand but straight forks, new aluminium rims, two spoke sets, a pair of exhausts, three oil filters and a few clips and brackets that were missing; all from M&W. His local bike shop ordered a RE5 parts book and a RE5 manual.

From here on it was a total restoration with all the stands, brackets, chassis etc. painted gloss black. The entire braking system was stripped down to its component parts and fitted with new seals and fresh paint. The rims had suffered badly from corrosion so new they had to be replaced, the fork lowers refurbished and the used forks legs fitted with new seals. A scooter paint shop sussed out the candy orange paint and with the bike back together it sailed through its MOT.

Back in the day Suzuki wrote chapter and verse on how to set up the throttle cables of which there are five! Two open/close cables, two port valve open/close cables and one to the oil pump. Dave found the info only partially helpful and spent an interesting year getting everything set up just so. Having ridden the bike fairly extensively during our test I can vouch for just how well it carbures.

Other than getting the cables properly correlated the only real issue turned out to be a persistently wet plug. This only happened when the bike was parked up and not used for a while and turned out to be a leaking vacuum tap that was swiftly replaced. More than 30 years on Dave still regularly rides the RE5 and despite its prodigious thirst (30mpg if used with a little restraint) does substantial mileages with Surrey to Leicestershire being perfectly viable.

passionate and generally keen to help each other. So with all that stacked against it just why would you bother? Quite simply because, if you like 1970s bikes, this is something so utterly different and unique. It moves you like nothing else you are ever likely to ride, handles better than many of its peers, doesn't vibrate, makes delicious noises and always draws a crowd. By the way, if you don't like people don't buy an RE5 as you'll always be surrounded by the curious and incredulous. It's a slice of history, a glimpse of what could have happened and a snap shot of what might have been.

Four decades on Suzuki's RE5 is as relevant to our modern world of transport as tank tops and bell bottom flares are to high street fashion yet people are still fascinated by them. It's said that Suzuki was so upset and embarrassed by the bike's failure that they dumped loads of parts and possibly unsold machines into the sea. The venture was a complete and utter disaster and nearly bought the company to its knees yet it came back with the awesome GS range and prospered.

Taken on its own merits Suzuki's RE5 is a stunning machine. In isolation it's totally breath-taking, captivating, enthralling. Okay, so Suzuki didn't win the battle for hearts and minds and subsequently history has been dismissive, duplicitous and downright derogatory to the RE. With better timing, some reinforcements and sharper strategists there's a chance our biking world might have looked totally different. There are always two sides to history and until the final RE5 breathes its last fortunately the tale of what might have been won't be totally redacted or expunged from the annals of motorcycling. *cmm*



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BACK TO THE FUTURE

In 1985 everything changed with the arrival of the Suzuki GSX-R750F and as part of the 30th anniversary of this amazing machine Suzuki GB has a stunning show-build planned.

WORDS: BERTIE SIMMONDS
PICS: SUZUKI GB AND BERTIE SIMMONDS

R
GSX





It's like that famous film of 1985: you've got an iconic vehicle and you've got to go back in time to help sort everything out.

Yes, that was it: Back to the Future, a time-travelling celluloid classic. In this very issue we have our own John Nutting talking about the machines that made that year 30 years ago so very special (see page 56) but one bike from that year is even more iconic and ground-breaking than any time-travelling DeLorean.

We're talking of course about Suzuki's seminal GSX-R750F, a machine that broke the mould and is still one of the bywords for performance motorcycling. In short, the Suzuki GSX-R range has led to the birth of the race-replica and (arguably) streetfighters, specials aplenty (7-11s, turbos and the like) and kick-started the race careers of such greats as Kevin Schwantz, Doug Polen and our own James Whitham.

Those of you who read *CMM* regularly will know that we're massive fans of Suzuki GB's Vintage Parts Programme here. Tim Davies Suzuki GB's aftersales marketing co-ordinator for parts and his team have gone out of their way (and I mean that literally) to bring us thousands of parts for our favourite Suzuki machines from the last 15 to 40 years and we love 'em for it. The great thing is that – along with stalwarts of the classic part Suzook scene such as Crooks' Suzuki and Robinsons Foundry – we probably now have a bigger selection of classic parts from everything from GS1000s, AP50s through to RGVs and GSX-Rs.

Last year to highlight what they do, they built up a TL1000S on their stand over the days spent at the Motorcycle Live show at the NEC. For 2015 they needed to trump that feat and there was only one motorcycle to choose – the GSX-R. Tim said: "I really don't think there's a bigger icon in motorcycling than the original GSX-R750. It's responsible for 30 years of sportsbikes as we know them today and also the popularity of the GSX-R brand."

As part of the 30th anniversary celebrations of the iconic range of sportsbikes, Suzuki will be rebuilding an original 750F with refurbished and new components. The bike, which is also part of Suzuki's popular Vintage Parts Programme, will be restored by Team Classic Suzuki technician Nathan Colombi (there could only be one choice) and will be completed and started-up live on the stand on the final day of the show. Nathan is THE man when it comes to Suzuki's Grand Prix machines (he keeps Steve Wheatman's amazing RGVs in fine fettle) and he also put the TL together last year, so he's the man with the plan. 🌀

Davies explains: "We've got 10 days to get the bike together. Nathan will build it, then strip it at his workshop then rebuild it again on the stand. Last year we had the TL build area at the back so now it's on the main Suzuki vintage area as a centrepiece. Nathan should be okay for his work-rate, as he's got me and the dealers to fend off the questions from the show-goers."

So, we know what will happen at Motorcycle Live over November 28 to December 6, but how was this all started and how did they find the bike? Tim says: "Our budget for buying the bike was about £5000 – which tells you how strong the money for a GSX-R750F is. It also had to be a UK model, which is tricky as there are many imported bikes out there. So, we tried and looked for three or four months. Eventually we asked Rob and Darin from Classic Bike Trackdays and they helped find one. Rob started asking around and found this UK spec one. We paid £2500 for it, it has just under 34k on the clocks and it was owned by a lovely fella by the name of Andy Feeley. If we're honest, you can see it looked good in the pictures – but isn't that always the case?"

As Tim says, it's amazing how prices have gone: five years ago £5000 would get you a mint-as-you-like Slabby. Now, for £2500 you get one like this, with plenty to do to it. Thankfully Suzuki were buying this, but as Nathan reminds us: it's always a case of buyer-beware. "We've bitten off a lot to chew with this," he says. "And for me it shows that sometimes you don't know what you're getting when you buy a bike. We've found thrust-washers missing on the crank. You'd never spot that from kicking the tyres or checking chassis numbers. In a way we'd prefer a bike with not quite so much to do on it, but it does show what we have in stock for this model."

This project has already taken lots of time and effort. Both Tim and Nathan admit this isn't your average shed build. While there is a budget for parts, it's a big one. Nathan explains: "We're looking at £14,000-£15,000 on this all-told. Which we know isn't what a *CMM* reader would do, but we will have an as-new 750F. We are using brand-new pistons, crank and lots of other engine parts will be new. I've spent one whole day ordering the parts and it's amazing just what is out there. Look at the carbs:



Nathan is a stickler for sorting things.



Original wheels tested for cracks.

One drawer chock-full of Slabby parts.



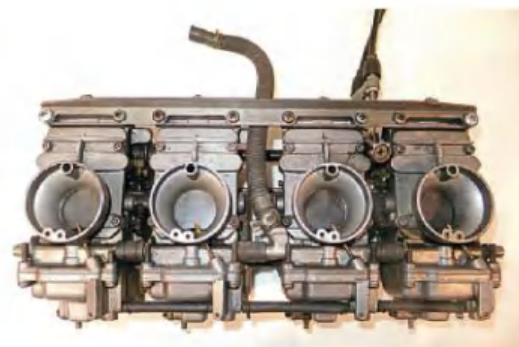
parts listed for them cover two pages of A4 and you can get everything but the carb bodies themselves, so we will vapour blast the existing ones. We have found a part that we can't get: carb gaskets. So like any reader of *CMM* would do, I've already got the right thickness paper and have made some!

The carbs alone show how much wear and tear goes into a 30-year-old bike; there are bits missing and different screws in there, and some are rounded off: just what you'd expect on a 30-year-old project. Sure, it would be nicer if this was a bit easier for me. Some of the major parts like the frame, swingarm and top cowling could be in better condition. I've been doing lots of work on the swingarm and rubbing the frame down to get the finish just right."

Some of the things that have befallen the bike make you giggle, though. Take the PDF (Positive Damping Fork) reservoir on the forks. Originally, these were gold but for some reason they were silver on this bike. "But at some stage, someone has painted them gold," giggles Nathan. "But could only get the brush so far around: you can see it now we've taken the fork-legs off. There were bits missing from the forks too, some washers were replaced incorrectly. Surprisingly the fork-tubes themselves are available from stock."



Tim Davies (left) and Nathan Colombi.



Carb bodies are only parts not listed.

G-H can given away by slotted cover.



Frame needed attention.



Much of the mighty motor will be replaced to 'as-new' condition.

So with many parts available, what's not? Nathan says: "As mentioned, you can't get carb bodies any more, or plastics or wheels (we're refurbishing ours and using a spray to check for cracks.) We think that the cowl is the hardest piece to find. They were light even back in the day and have become brittle.

"Of course the F has three bolts on the top cowl and the later G-H has just two. So we bought what was 'definitely' an F-model top-cowl and – yes you guessed it. It was from the later bike, so we will be doing some mixing and matching to make it all work."

Bodywork can be an issue on these, but the boys say that the fuel tank is pretty complete. Nathan adds: "I've ordered all the original graphics that we've got in parts which is pretty much all of them. It helps that the bike itself didn't have many graphics. We are making the Full Floater sticker though and some of the flashes that were decals on the original are going to be sprayed on. We want this to be a high quality build. We just hope the thin panels haven't lost their shape. The wiring loom needs to be refurbished, so a bit of time needs to be spent on most of the stuff."

Other parts throw up similar problems. Tim: "We have a 'proper' exhaust but the cover is slotted not drilled, so it's an original G-H model exhaust. We will make a drilled sleeve for it and it will be blasted and touched up. Some parts naturally were superseded on the G-H models of 1986-1987. For example the F model runs a rear brake lever with a platform with a rubber foot on it, but the G-H has a

knurled bar. The rear brake caliper is also now a different finish. We are doing this to promote our Vintage Parts Scheme, so we have to go with what parts we can source and what fits. We know this may upset the purists, but we are restricted by time on how far we can go for originality."

They have to be flexible, as (at the time of writing) they are just four weeks away from the show itself. So many parts when we visited were away being blasted or painted. The engine promises to look superb and inside, they also want to make it as good as new. Nathan says: "As mentioned pistons and parts will be new. We are running half a millimetre oversize to allow for wear and we will re-cut the valve seats and use new valves and springs and I've ordered a whole gearbox with every shaft and bearing. Only one part of this is on back-order. We want it to go as well as it looks. Many show bikes don't."

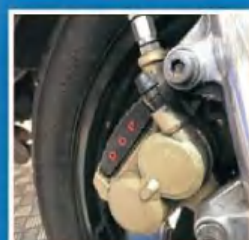
Considering the amount of parts we saw ready to go on, the whole Suzuki parts arena has been scoured. Most parts come from the Vintage Parts Programme in the UK, but also Suzuki Germany and other parts of Europe too have been pilfered. This shows just how your local dealer can also help you, although Tim and Nathan joke that they hope they've not frustrated any 750F restorers out there by draining the parts needed to finish a project! One major part that has left them scratching their heads is the mirrors: these can't be found for love nor money anymore. The current plan is to use replacement, but if anyone has some for sale, contact CMM and we shall let them know. ➔



Caliper was cruddy.



Hilarious 'repaint' job for PDF.



Brakes will get full overhaul.



Just looking at it, you'd think it was worth £2500 all day long: but what lies within?

Getting original front brake discs has led to some CMM reader style ingenuity from Nathan. He says: "We've got plenty of left-hand discs – but the right hand ones are unavailable. We can't use aftermarket discs as the originals looked so prominent on the bike. Tim looked into going to the original suppliers and getting more made. We asked for 50, but the price per disc would be in the region of £290 before Suzuki would even put any mark-up on them. It couldn't be done. So instead I de-riveted some left-handers, turned them round and re-riveted them: job done!"

The task ahead then is simple: the bike will be built over the first seven days or so of the show. To help, Nathan will strip and rebuild the bike before the show so he knows the bike inside out. He will also have certain sub-assemblies ready to go, but in the main it's a full rebuild. He says: "The rough guide is that we will have Saturday and Sunday to do the bare rolling chassis (frame, swingarm and brakes) then Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday will be spent building the engine. Gears will be off shafts and valves will be out of heads, so there is a lot to be done. Then the last few days will be engine installation on Thursday and then we will do the final work with radiator, electrics and bodywork. Thankfully I'm getting help from Tom Crooks, Martin's lad from Crooks' Suzuki."

So what will happen to this machine, which has effectively been a 'no-expense-spared' restoration? Tim says: "The beauty of this is that we've got a new GSX-R1000 out next year and we will have effectively a 'brand-new' GSX-R750F for journalists – and that includes CMM – to ride and enjoy. We can roll it out for the launch so that's positive as it will really show off Suzuki's heritage. We want to see John Reynolds on it and James Whitham on it. We think we should get some good press from it." **cmm**



Swingarm was a bit chewed.

Nathan did a top repair job.



It looked okay before, but it will look mint!

So what's next? Well, Nathan is rushing around making sure everything is in place, for the build-up and strip-down pre-show then your humble scribe going to be helping out on the final day when the bike is going to be built-up and presented to the throng. Apparently, I only need to be good at making tea. Result!

Next issue, we will give you an overview of the build from the show, along with some top tips on restoring a GSX-R750F from Nathan himself and interview the previous owner of this very bike. Stay tuned!

- Suzuki can be found on stand 4D20 when Motorcycle Live opens its doors on Saturday, November 28, 2015.
- www.suzuki-gb.co.uk/motorcycles/my-suzuki/vintage-parts/
- GSX-R owners also have the chance to get involved with Suzuki's celebrations at Motorcycle Live, with three spaces available on the GSX-R display up for grabs. To enter owners simply need to upload a photo of their GSX-R to www.suzuki-gb.co.uk/gsx-r-competition.



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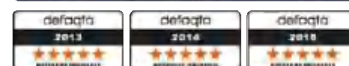
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THE YEAR THE FUTURE STARTED



With 500cc two-stroke race-replicas, 100bhp 750cc sports bikes with alloy frames or downdraft inlet geometry, the 1985 model year marked many turning points for the motorcycle world. **John Nutting** picks out the highlights

It was the year that the movie *Back to the Future* and the Dire Straits album *Brothers in Arms* were released, when Freddie Spencer won both the 250cc and 500cc world road racing titles and when for the first time you had a choice of factory-built Grand Prix racer replicas in your local showroom.

It was 30 years ago in 1985 and, as Alain Prost won the Formula 1 championship and unbeknownst to us a baby was born by the name of Lewis Hamilton, we were humming along to Money for Nothing and wondering when we might see a DeLorean car on the road. Meanwhile in Japan, the factories were slugging it out with a wave of new launches guaranteed to satisfy the most avid of sports bikes fans.

Until then, very few road-going bikes could boast a proper racing pedigree, but after Yamaha released its two-stroke RD500LC in 1984, Suzuki followed up a year later with its own 500cc square-

four two-stroke that was a much more faithful reproduction of the production racers that had been so successful on the Grand Prix circuits. Fans were stunned, but it got better. Suzuki also revealed its new GSX-R750, featuring a new 100bhp oil/air-cooled four mounted in an ultra-light chassis using an aluminium alloy frame

Yamaha had also been anticipating the advent of 750cc class racing and had launched its own new FZ750 sports machine which although not as light featured an engine configuration that would set the pattern for years to come.

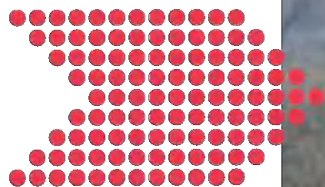
In complete contrast was a bike to appeal to the US stop-light drag-racing fans, the V-Max, that despite its unwieldiness featured a 1200 V-four engine with such immense power that it could leave almost anything in its tyre-smoking wake. Kawasaki, which for 1984 had advanced superbike technology with its GPz900R, followed it a year later with the similar GPz600R.

Honda had also launched a new range of liquid-cooled V4s for 1984, with the VF500F, VF750F and range topping VF1000R, but to exploit the image of its newly resurgent racing campaign introduced a pair of new two-strokes that would fly the flag: the NS400R triple and the NS250R.

In Europe, only the Ducati factory carried the racing torch and inspired by Tony Rutter's fourth consecutive world Formula 2 title, launched its 750 F1 V-twin.

So at the start of 1985 the scene was set for a new era of exotic sporting machines. First of that year's new models to be shown to the press were the 750cc fours, with Yamaha's FZ750 being unveiled at the Estoril circuit in Portugal.

Planning had started four years earlier under the guidance of project chief Osamu Tamura with the objective of developing a high-performance machine with winning potential in the coming 750cc racing class and durability to take Yamaha into the Nineties. An even longer development programme had concluded that an engine with five-valve combustion chambers would provide class-leading power with road-going flexibility.



SPECIFICATION

DUCATI 750F1

ENGINE

748cc ohc air-cooled
90° V-twin, 5-speed,
chain drive

PEAK POWER

76bhp at 9000rpm

WHEELBASE

1400mm

WEIGHT

165kg

MAXIMUM SPEED

120mph (est)

ST ¼ MILE

12.8s

FUEL CONSUMPTION

50mpg



But that was just part of the picture. Key was a liquid-cooled four-cylinder engine that was even more compact than Yamaha's novel XJ series. The cylinders were canted forward at 45°, enabling the carburetors a straight vertical drop from the air box. And the fuel tank was mounted low above the gearbox.

The chassis took cues from Yamaha's racing team with a rectangular steel perimeter frame that placed more weight on the front wheel, a 16-inch with geometry aimed at giving a combination of responsive steering and stability at speed. At 460lb (209 kilos) though, the FZ750 would prove to be heavier than the opposition. Yamaha had arranged with the local police for a stretch of deserted road south of Lisbon to be available. Chinning the tank and revving to the red line through the gears I saw 10,800rpm on the electronic rev meter.

That was around what Yamaha claimed, 145mph, but the speedo was showing 250kph, or 155mph in old money. Either way, this was

massively quick for a seven fifty of the time.

Also launched at Estoril for 1985 were the latest versions of Yamaha's Powervalue 350cc twin, the fully-faired RD350F providing better comfort at high-speeds, and complemented by the unfaired RD350N, which also incorporated a number of common detail improvements.

Next up was Suzuki's GSX-R750, which was launched at the Ryoyo circuit in Japan in February 1985. Under a clear blue sky, the track disappeared into the distance in both directions, its dominant feature being a straight more than a mile long that wound into a tightening 100mph right-hander. Dozens of GSX-R750 machines were lined up, red and blue, glittering in the sun. According to Suzuki the GSX-R750 tipped the scales at an amazing 176kg dry, or 388lb in old money, which was about the same as most 400cc bikes (and only slightly more than modern sports bikes). Like the FZ750, it also broke new ground with 100bhp on tap, giving



Honda's XBR500.



Ducati's TT-F2 machine at the 1985 Isle of Man.

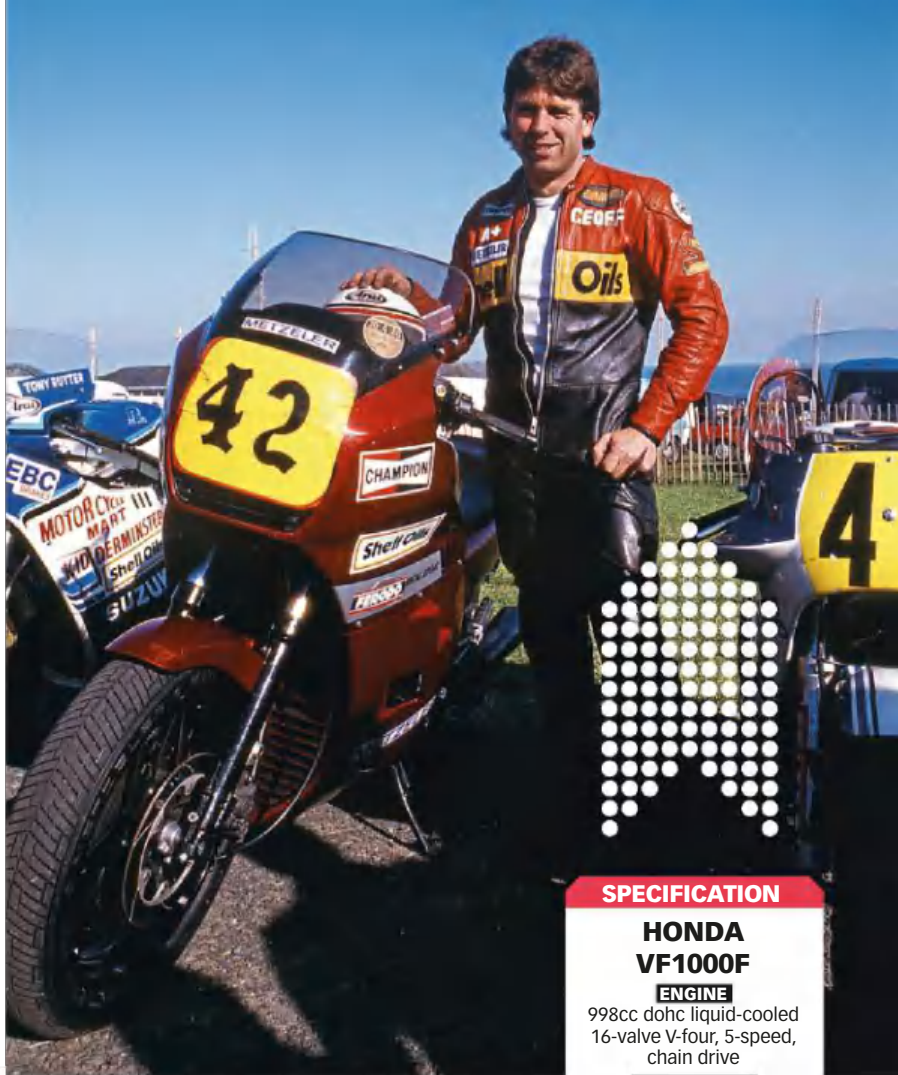
a power-to-weight ratio benefit of more than 20%. The GSX-R750's engine could also be made lighter, it was claimed, by means of Suzuki's Advanced Cooling System, or SACS, in which copious volumes of oil were circulated through the cylinder head and crankcases, a technique that had been perfected in the most highly-developed reciprocating aero engines of the Second World War, such as the Rolls-Royce Merlin that powered the Supermarine Spitfire.

That, allied to the aluminium-alloy frame that had first been used on the RG250 Gamma two years earlier, gave the Suzuki a huge advantage, not just in acceleration, but overall handling and flickability. Few could live with the GSX-R750 on the road or track. In its first year of production, the GSX-R750 cleaned up with victories in the Isle of Man TT, the Le Man 24-hour endurance race and Japan's domestic TT-F1 series. Its exploits, and of those who raced it, were the stuff of legend.

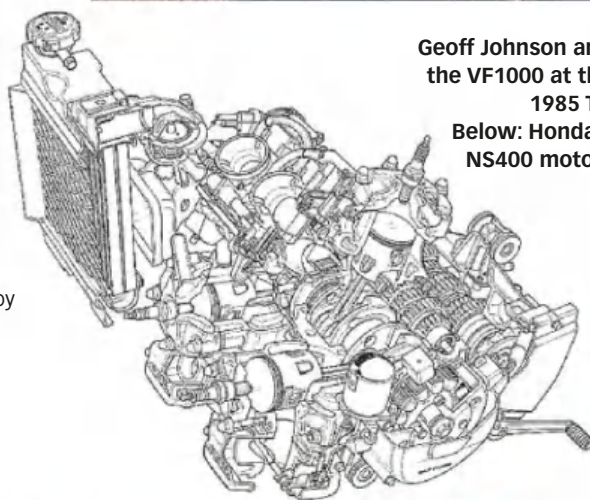
Not long after it hit the showrooms in Europe, emerging US star Kevin Schwantz was provided with a modified GSX-R750 to compete in the televised Anglo-American Match races held on British circuits over Easter. Despite a lack of top speed he impressed with his spectacular antics, high-siding yet regaining control.

In the Isle of Man, Mick Grant won the Production TT after buying a set of Metzeler tyres when the Michelins he was contracted to using upset the handling. Owners didn't have to fantasise that they were on a race bike. This was the real thing. No wonder that around 10,000 were sold in 1985.

When Suzuki's RG500 Gamma road bike was launched three months later at the Hockenheim GP circuit in Germany it was better than I, or anyone, could have expected. It had almost everything from the racer, and more. The engine was just like the factory units featuring four 125cc liquid-cooled cylinders with disc inlet valves and four expansion chambers jutting out of the rear. Drive was through a cassette-style six-speed gearbox. Its frame was aluminium-alloy and all enclosed in a racing fairing.



Geoff Johnson and the VF1000 at the 1985 TT. Below: Honda's NS400 motor.



SPECIFICATION

HONDA VF1000F

ENGINE

998cc dohc liquid-cooled 16-valve V-four, 5-speed, chain drive

PEAK POWER

116bhp at 10,000rpm

WHEELBASE

1505mm

WEIGHT

234kg

MAXIMUM SPEED

150mph (est)

ST ¼ MILE

12.8s

FUEL CONSUMPTION

40mpg

SPECIFICATION

HONDA NS400R

ENGINE

387cc two-stroke liquid-cooled triple, 6-speed, chain drive

PEAK POWER

72bhp at 9500rpm

WHEELBASE

1385mm

WEIGHT

163kg

MAXIMUM SPEED

130mph (est)

ST ¼ MILE

12.5s/105mph

FUEL CONSUMPTION

40mpg



Honda's NS250R.



With 95bhp on tap it was almost as potent as the new generation of 750cc four-stroke fours, yet it weighed just 340lb, not much more than some 350cc twins. At the time it was the wildest two-wheel tool you could buy. And it stole a march on Yamaha's four-cylinder repli-racer, the RD500LC launched in 1984 which was heavier, less potent and more complex. It was also less of a replica because Yamaha didn't offer a proper production racer for the 500cc class, the RD500LC being more of a concoction of technologies.

At its launch the RG500 provided an uncanny combination of exotic civility. The engine would idle smoothly, albeit with an irregular popping from the exhausts and a rattle from the disc inlet valves. Sitting astride the bike there was nothing remarkable about the positioning of the controls: indeed it promised a comfortable ride. Instrumentation was comprehensive with white-faced dials, but the speedo, rev meter and water temperature gauge were mounted in a race-style foam surround.

Snick into bottom gear and the bike pulled away smoothly with deep drone from the pipes, although response from the four 28mm flat-slide Mikuni carburetors hiding under the fairing was at first a bit wheezy. Better response came when the rev meter needle started moving off its stop at 3000rpm. Still there was no indication of what was in store until the rev meter hit 7000rpm and all hell let loose as the front end suddenly lightened. On Hockenheim's long straights the RG500 flew up to an indicated 150mph with ease, the rider tucked into a cocoon of high-speed fantasy as the engine revved to 11,000rpm. Also launched at Hockenheim was the latest version

SPECIFICATION

SUZUKI RG500

ENGINE

498cc two-stroke liquid-cooled square four, 6-speed, chain drive

PEAK POWER

95bhp at 9500rpm

WHEELBASE

1425mm

WEIGHT

154kg

MAXIMUM SPEED

145mph

ST ¼ MILE

11.1s/122mph

FUEL CONSUMPTION

32mpg

SPECIFICATION

KAWASAKI

GPZ600R

ENGINE

592cc dohc liquid-cooled four, 6-speed, chain drive

PEAK POWER

74bhp at 10,500rpm

WHEELBASE

1430mm

WEIGHT

195kg

MAXIMUM SPEED

135mph

ST ¼ MILE

12.2s

FUEL CONSUMPTION

52mpg



of the RG250 Gamma featuring a revised parallel two-stroke twin engine with the same Automatic Exhaust Control (SAEC) to enable peak power to be increased to 49bhp without sacrificing mid-range. With a sleek full fairing incorporating a belly pan that extended to the rear wheel, the bike could make the best use of the extra power. On Hockenheim's long straights I tucked in and saw an easy 120mph on the clock.

Almost as much fun was the little RG125 two-stroke single featuring similar engine technology and aerodynamics, enabling it to be held flat out at 100mph for most of the track. Living with an RG500 from day to day could be a chore however. Tested at year's end in wintry conditions, its plugs would foul and the carburetion would become vague unless given a high-speed motorway blast. The RG500 might have been produced for just two years, outlawed by tightening exhaust emission regulations, but it lives on to continue the pure sports dream.

Kawasaki had changed the direction of superbike technology with its 155mph liquid-cooled four-cylinder GPz900R in 1984. A year later for 1985 Kawasaki created the 600 sports category with its GPZ600R featuring a steel perimeter frame, full sports fairing and 16/18in wheels. But the four-cylinder 592cc engine, although featuring liquid cooling and 16 valves, was an adaptation of the earlier air-cooled GPz550 four, which without the inlet geometry used on the FZ750 limited its power to a claimed 75bhp. It set the scene for the class though.



Mat Oxley at the 1985 TT. Pic by Phil Masters.



SPECIFICATION

SUZUKI RG250W

ENGINE

247cc two-stroke liquid-cooled parallel twin, 6-speed, chain drive

PEAK POWER

49bhp at 9500rpm

WHEELBASE

1385mm

WEIGHT

130kg

MAXIMUM SPEED

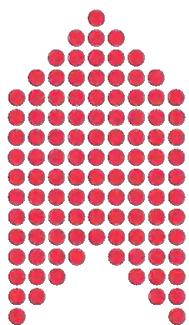
115mph

ST ¼ MILE

14.4s

FUEL CONSUMPTION

35mpg



SPECIFICATION

SUZUKI GSX-R750

ENGINE

749cc dohc 16-valve oil/air-cooled inline four, 6-speed, chain drive

PEAK POWER

105bhp at 10,500rpm

WHEELBASE

1435mm

WEIGHT

176kg

MAXIMUM SPEED

150mph

ST ¼ MILE

11.0s

FUEL CONSUMPTION

45mpg

At Honda, its racing division was throwing everything into a full-blown effort to win the world road racing titles in 1985, having lost to Yamaha's Eddie Lawson the previous year, the consolation being the manufacturers' title with riders Freddie Spencer, Ron Haslam, Randy Mamola and Raymonde Roche.

To celebrate, Honda offered road riders the NS400R two-stroke triple, a gorgeous-looking sports bike with one of the factory's first aluminium-alloy frames, racing style composite wheels and full aerodynamics. With peak power of 72bhp and a dry weight of 359lb, top speed was more than 125mph. But while the engine had three cylinders, it wasn't a replica of the NS500 racer's which had two parallel upward facing cylinders and one facing down. On the NS400R it two forward facing pots and a central vertical one.

The NS400R was still a lovely piece of work, but being aimed primarily at the Japanese market with a 387cc capacity, there was nowhere to race it. That was where the first NS250R V-twin came in, and although unavailable for UK riders through the usual channels it qualified for the Isle of Man TT production race. Talented journalist Mat Oxley rode and promptly went out and won the 250cc

class. Honda did well in that year's TT with Joey Dunlop winning the Junior, Formula 1 and Senior races. But the most unlikely success came in the 1500cc class of the Production race.

One of the updated models in the range was a fully-faired version of the 998cc V-four, the VF1000F. Geoff Johnson, who had won a year earlier on a Kawasaki GPz900R, appeared to have made a poor choice in switching to the Honda with its barn-door aerodynamics. But he repeated the win and at almost the same 105mph race speed, showing how strong the sports-tourer could be in the right hands.

Ducati's offering for 1985 had an even stronger racing pedigree. The Italian factory had been offering racing versions of the 600 Pantah V-twin but only to favoured teams such as Sports Motor Cycles who with rider Tony Rutter clinched four world Formula 2 championships, including three TT wins. In 1985, Rutter fielded a factory F2 machine and won again. This bike featured new styling that was mirrored in the 750F1 road bike, Ducati's first proper racing replica since the bevel-drive 750SS that was used by Paul Smart to win the Imola 200 in 1972. Like the 600 racers, the 750F1 featured a short-stroke air-cooled engine with belt-driven desmo overhead camshafts slotted into a Verlicchi tubular-steel trellis frame using premium suspension and a fashionable 16/18in wheel combination.

It would be another of those rare occasions when your average punter could buy a road bike that was closely derived from a world road-racing title winner. But that was 1985 for you, a great year for proper sports bikes. **cmn**

Yamaha's mighty VMax.



SPECIFICATION

YAMAHA RD350N

ENGINE

347cc two-stroke liquid-cooled parallel twin, 6-speed, chain drive

PEAK POWER

59bhp at 9000rpm

WHEELBASE

1385mm

WEIGHT

143kg

MAXIMUM SPEED

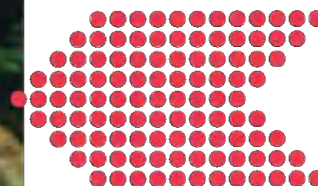
120mph

ST ¼ MILE

13.16s/99.54mph

FUEL CONSUMPTION

45mpg



SPECIFICATION

YAMAHA FZ750

ENGINE

749cc dohc 20-valve liquid-cooled inline four, 6-speed, chain drive

PEAK POWER

105bhp at 10,500rpm

WHEELBASE

1485mm

WEIGHT

205kg

MAXIMUM SPEED

150mph

ST ¼ MILE

11.2s

FUEL CONSUMPTION

50mpg



RETRO **REBOOT**

Honda MB-50

You never forget your first time, and for many of us Honda's MB-50 is a bike worthy of a Retro Reboot. Here's what we'd like to see!

WORDS AND PHOTOS: KAR LEE



It's 1981 and Honda has not one, but two, two-stroke single-cylinder mopeds providing big-bike fantasies to 16-year-olds up and down the country. Youths were charmed by the hi-spec MB-50 (known as the MB-5 in the US) and chassis-sharing off-road styled MT-50. The MB had it all: a big cockpit fairing, Comstar wheels with a front disc brake and while the speedo only read up to 40mph the rev-counter went all the way to the dizzy heights of 10,500rpm. In reality it hardly needed any of that as it only made 2.5bhp and was restricted to 30mph. Thankfully, it looked the part and together with a low price of £399 sold well in the UK.



ENGINE

The air-cooled, two-stroke, reed-valved 49cc motor is impressive in terms of aesthetics but in standard UK form makes a paltry 2.5bhp, which is barely enough to hit 30mph with a slight headwind. Throw in a hill and fifth gear is next to useless. The US version is better, making a healthier 7bhp which is just enough to de-skin the rice pudding and Honda even made an 80cc version for the German market. However, we're going to cheat even more on this occasion. Honda's own H100 commuter shares an almost identical frame meaning the motor drops in with only minor mods. With modern fuel-injection we will be needing a speedo that goes up to 75mph.

CHASSIS

The Cross line backbone frame gives the MB a cool look that still looks modern today so we've made our own version with thicker tubes to handle our upgraded motor. The wheels and alloy plate section of the frame is from Honda's own SFA concept and the swingarm is designed to complement the main frame tube. Low clip-ons get the rider out of the wind as every single mph matters. Our MB continues the high-spec theme of the original and sports a twin disc brake set-up, radial front caliper, inverted forks and rising rate rear monoshock.

BODYWORK

The lines of the original MB were ahead of its time, using the frame and engine as a major visual point. Our bike keeps it simple and the oil fill-up tank is still located in the compartment at the front of the fuel tank. The cowl and headlight is a modified CB500 item and there's an optional fly-screen, but overall it is about rebooting the clean uncluttered and desperately cool lines of the original. **cmm**



What do you think? Is this what will get youngsters back onto two wheels? Let us know at the usual address.

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The Shed...

Where the bikes, bits, solid fuel and cat litter tray reside and Pip makes a welcome return.



Latest from Laser

Here are some essential, everyday tools for any workshop from Laser Tools.

The latest range includes very neat magnetic socket racks for holding 1/4in drive, 3/8in drive and 1/2in drive sockets; they feature carrying handles for use around the workshop and magnetic backs for fixing to metal roll cabs or toolboxes. They also fit neatly and securely in the tool drawer. Designed to hold both standard and deep sockets, you will always have the sockets you need close to hand. Laser part number 6209 is 1/4in drive and holds a maximum socket size of 14mm; part number 6210 is 3/8in drive and holds a maximum socket size of 24mm; part number 6211 is 1/2in drive and holds a maximum socket size of 30mm.

Next up, the magnetic parts tray (part number 6144), is manufactured from soft closed-cell EVA foam and holds those tools and smaller parts on the bonnet, wing or tank without fear of damage to the paintwork. Measuring 400mm x 180mm x 32mm deep, this tray will hold several spanners, sockets and small parts easily.



Finally, how about a heavy duty, steel shelving unit Laser part number 6186?

Measuring 900mm x 450mm x 1800mm with capacity per shelf 265kg evenly distributed, this MDF shelving unit with black, powder-coated, boltless finish frame is a must.

■ **More details from www.lasertools.co.uk. We've checked prices and Amazon is your best bet for these, with prices of: 6209: £10, 6210: £13.60, 6211: £20.68, 6144: £11.18 and 6186: £70.32.**

GET YER STRAP-ON!

If you're anything like me, you'll look upon the humble bungee strap as a strip of gold.

Mates beg, borrow and steal them, meaning that you can have problems attaching luggage, bags and bits to your bike. Well, maybe – just maybe – the bungee has been superseded by these – the Rok Strap. Now, don't giggle: apparently they're rubber, so they have a shock cord that provides constant tension and webbing gives adjustable length. Some boffins at Oxford Products reckon they are twice as strong and 100 times safer than a bungee. Either way they come



in many different versions (and colours for your kids who have scooters) and cost between £8.99 to £14.99 depending on length or style.

■ **Check out: www.oxprod.com**

You big studs!

Wemoto has introduced a range of quality stainless steel exhaust stud kits for Honda models.

The corrosion and rust-resistance of the new stainless steel stud kits improve appearance and durability of these exposed components, providing an effective upgrade to the original part with the added benefit of a lower price. The exhaust studs are M8 x 1.25 and reduce to M7 x 1.00. They are available as complete kits of either four, or eight, which includes both the stainless steel studs and mild steel nuts.



Don't forget your copper grease when assembling the exhaust studs! Prices are: 4 x Stainless Steel Exhaust Stud Kit with Nuts retail at £9.96. 8 x Stainless Steel Exhaust Stud Kit with Nuts retail at £19.96

■ **For model fitment range visit www.wemoto.com/components/Exhaust/Studs/StainlessSteelKits or bell them on: 01273 597072.**

Off-road hoses

Here are the latest from Samco Sport and Racebikebits. A wide-range of hoses for modern and classic machines are available, but if you're a mud-plugger, these are for you. A six-piece radiator hose kit with a lifetime guarantee for the Honda CR500 (1989-2001) which apparently improve water flow, lower engine temperatures and look damn trick. Price is £80.92 and the clip kit is a further £22. Most colours are in stock, too.





PIP HIGHAM

Just when you think it's going so well.....

I still get a bit of a tingle when I step onto a race track. I've scampered down 'The Mistrale' at Paul Ricard at 6 in the AM as the mist clears and I've strolled the mile or so straight at Hockenheim before they messed it all up. But a magical September morning at Elvington takes some beating. It's just big... and very flat.

As the sun creeps up I realise that I'm in the middle of a horsepower tsunami, surrounded by bikes with over 500hp on tap and I'm down to ride my diminutive 168cc Ducati, a near 60-year-old tiddler with about nine gee gees on a good day. I don't care, I love little bikes, I'm here for the UKTA/Straightliners records bash. You pays your money and get to pound up and down the two and a half mile ex V-bomber airstrip for two whole days. I had intended to bring my 100cc bike but the coefficient of embarrassment was a bit too great even for me. I was unlikely to set any records on either bike but the 160 had received many a good thrashing and, with luck, wouldn't make me look too ridiculous... who am I kidding? A geriatric old fart like me plastered all over a tiny red bike, ridiculous doesn't even get close!

With my vital signs checked and the bike and safety gear all examined I waited in line, dwarfed by Power Commanders, turbos and raw insanity, my turn comes and off I wobble, groping around for the gear lever, ah, did I mention that I had to convert the little squirt to hand change? A last minute rehash of the gear linkage was needed as I couldn't get my hoof within about two feet of the gear lever, a quick rummage in my debris box yielded a pair of rose joints, a Honda gear change shaft and an Aprilia (?) gear lever. Fortunately the little Ducati is quite happy with clutchless upshifts as I decided, in a moment of temporary insanity to cross the linkage over to the sinister side. The first run, and the return, pass off



without incident and, even better the speeds are on the right side of 80mph, my gob was... no, let's not go there, suffice to say I was pleasantly surprised. I remember that my CB160 was reputedly good for 82mph with 16.5hp, I know this has nowhere near that much so I'm pleased that Ken H's fairing must be doing a fair job of nipping through the breeze. That night I have a good look round to see if I can unleash a couple of horses and discover a microscopic bit of debris partially blocking the main jet, as this is only just a milli in diameter it don't take much to clean it out and steal a pony or two.

With the Contis inflated as tight as you like and the battery showing 13v I'm gagging to run early on the Sunday but there's a curfew until 10.30am. At 10.31 I'm tucked in and flat out, the little Duke is singing, the timing ticket conveys the best news: 91.3mph! I'm now officially excited, time to run back to get the requisite back to back runs in within the hour. As I get into the measured distance I remember thinking: 'Know what, this thing is going so well I could drop a couple of teeth on the rear sprocket...' Bang... clatter... silence. Fifty yards from the timing beams something cries enough and the poor little creature lets go, I free-wheel back to the pits knowing that the sickness is serious, I'm brassed off, but in reality I knew that I'd asked too much of the little bike.

A glance up the exhaust port revealed a tangle of broken bits, sort of engine soup, not good. However 25 minutes later I had transplanted the spare bullet into the red bike courtesy of Colin Wilkinson, he'd lent me his unknown 160 engine on a 'you break it, you bought it' basis, fair enough, and although Col's engine hadn't been run for a dog's age it fired up second kick and wheezed along amazingly well. Having wrecked one engine I have to admit that I was a touch apprehensive and I rode the last couple of passes with a bit of decorum, possibly due to the fact that the clutch was totally solid and if I broke it the consequences could have been, er, inconvenient.

The whole records thing is a mystical area to me with many classes and disciplines but I believe that we did establish a few, one of them had to be for daft old git on little red bike... noisy little red bike. We'll be back, no mistake, I want to do 100 per on the poor little creature.

Skidmarx screens!

Skidmarx have been making screens and bodywork since the 1990s and their fitment list includes a wide choice of screens, huggers, road and race bodywork for machines dating back to the 1970s.

Little wonder they're always there at the CMM Stafford Show year after year. With such a wide application range you could do worse than to contact them for info on what screens they can do for your special or restoration. Remember, like the pics here sometimes taste went out

of the window in the 1990s so you will see coloured screens, but they do plain screens and smoked.

Prices? Well a double-bubble for the T595 Daytona is £54.95 and it's a direct replacement for the original screen. A double-bubble for the TL1000S is the same price and standard replacement screens, in clear/tint are £42.95. The Stealth cockpit fairing shown on the XJR1300 is £149.95.

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Shear magnetism

Always double-check everything or you will have to go to Liverpool, says Stan Stephens. WORDS: STAN STEPHENS PICS: STAN STEPHENS/DAVE SMITH



I was looking through the October issue of *CMM* when I came across the story about the lovely Suzuki GT380 restoration, with the

owner Dave Smith standing next to his pride and joy.

I recognised Dave as a customer and read the article. I had to smile when I came to the piece where he said the following: "Stan Stephens did the engine. I have to take my hat off to him, what a gent he is and his service is beyond first class." While that was very nice of him to say, there is a story behind it!

When I write articles in *CMM* on rebuilding an engine, I always emphasise to check everything as you build it. When you put the crankcases together always check the crank turns freely; when you put the gearbox in always check the gears all work, ditto kickstart, ditto clutch operation, etc. This article is about just

that. Always check everything at each stage because if you don't it may come back to bite your bum.

About three years ago I had too much work on as usual and Bruce Maus, the ex-Kenny Roberts works mechanic, offered to come to work for me while he was in England. I have worked on my own for many years now but it was good to work alongside another good mechanic for a while.

Bruce and I were working at the bench, he was building a Suzuki GT550 engine and I was building Dave Smith's GT380 engine. I was finishing the GT380 and Bruce was still building the GT550. Dave had already paid for the job so when I finished it we lowered it into its crate and I packed it up ready for the courier to collect the next day.

In the morning Bruce finished the GT550 and we moved it off the bench. There on the bench was a clutch push rod. I said to Bruce that he had left it out of

the GT550, he assured me he hadn't and he operated the clutch arm to prove it and the clutch operation felt right. Now on the Suzuki triples the clutch operating arm is in the left-hand engine cover and has a short push rod as part of the mechanism and another short clutch rod goes inside the gearbox shaft, the piece of clutch rod left on the bench was from inside the gearbox shaft.

If it wasn't from the GT550 it must have been from the GT380. I opened up the crate to have a look. The GT380 engine had not come with the left-hand engine cover on so as I looked through the crate I could see the shaft but I could not see down the shaft. A handy little tool I keep in my tool-box is a telescopic magnet, it's a long thin telescopic shaft with a little magnet on the end. I extended the telescopic tool and slid it down the shaft to feel for the clutch rod, sure enough I was the guilty party, I had left the short



Above: The engine as sent.

Below: The culprit!



clutch rod out. With the engine still in the crate I popped the clutch rod in and resealed up the crate. I said to Bruce that it was a near one, the customer wouldn't have been happy, then Securicor collected the engine.

A few days later I went to use my little magnet on a stick, the magnet was not on the end. I asked Bruce what he had done with it. He said he hadn't used it and the last time he saw it was when I pushed it up the GT380 gearshaft. It slowly dawned on us where it was, inside Dave Smith's clutch!

The phone rang, it was Dave Smith, he said he couldn't get the clutch to work! He had put the left-hand engine cover on and because it would not go on by about 10mm he had wound the cover screws in until the cover was fully on and now there

was no clutch at all. I told Dave to leave it to me. I very rarely make a mistake when building an engine but I had made one here, all because I didn't follow my golden rule to always check everything and just my luck Dave Smith lived in Liverpool which is way in the north-west and I live in Sevenoaks which is in the south-east of England. What was I going to do? Well, I went indoors and said to my wife, Julie: "How do you fancy a trip up to the Lake District in the camper van, I will have to drop into Liverpool on the way?"

When we arrived at Dave Smith's house we found it was in the road where John Lennon lived. Dave's house was quite imposing, it would have been worth about a million in Sevenoaks and a fair bit in Liverpool. I thought at least he will have a

nice big heated workshop. Wrong, it was tiny and crammed with bike bits, I had to work on the bike while hanging over the seat with Dave shining a torch. Sure enough when I stripped the clutch off there was the bloody magnet.

It was well gone midnight when I finished. Dave is an interesting guy, he is a top drummer and the list of people and bands he has played with is impressive as were the signed pictures of him with some of the stars. I play electric bass so we talked music for a while and Dave had me sign a T-shirt. He was very grateful, but as I said at the beginning of this article, it made me smile when he said my "service was beyond first-class," I think I earned that compliment but it was all my own fault! Learn this lesson! **cmm**





Project Honda CBR900RR Fireblade *part 1*

Blade sharpening

Does this fool ever stick to a plan? Well, he reckons he has or is now.
Where have we heard this before?

WORDS: BERTIE SIMMONDS PHOTOS: GARY CHAPMAN/BERTIE SIMMONDS



I can't help being a serial buyer and seller of bikes. I can't help it.

In my defence I've only once lost money on buying a modern classic, so the way I look at it, it's money in the bank and I have my fun!

My flitty-flitty butterfly brain means I have a great idea, chase it and then completely change my mind. This is why over the last five years I've worked out that I've owned 10 bikes, maybe more (I'm quite forgetful). From an Africa Twin to the last of the double-cradle GSX-R1100s, I've been addicted to buying cheap bikes

before the price creeps up. The last three years of my dotage have been in these pages for you all to see: TDM850 (too dull) Aprilia Mille (a mate made me an offer I couldn't refuse before Christmas and I'm a single parent with a teenage daughter), Yamaha RD350R (in bits and in biscuit tins in one cat-wee smelling corner of the garage) and now the Honda FireBlade.

Another Honda FireBlade I mean, as this will be the ninth that has gone through my hands from an Urban Tiger 1995 RR-S, two 929s (2000 and a 2001 in yellow that I'd love to get back) a 2002 954 in white and then a series of modern

ones from the RR-5 1000cc Fireblade (lower case b now!) and the last an RR-8 in old man purple. There are rumours that I once wrote a book on the early incarnations too.

As mentioned in August's Quick Spin, I'd known of this P-reg RR-V for a few years when a mate bought it cheap at a garage clear-out. He knew I'd always liked it (I'd ridden it for CMM's main test back in 2012) and when he finally decided to sell it early this year, I swallowed hard and paid him the £1900 he wanted. Nope, not the cheapest Blade out there and not the sought-after first models or even first



Shock works but looks shoddy.



Not quite the original can.



This is better and will go on over winter.



Abba stands are the best in the business.



She cleans up quite nicely.

Foxeye variant, but I knew this was a good, solid bike and I knew its history.

It also came with some sweeteners. It had just had a set of stainless downpipes put on it that marry up to the original end-can (which also came with the bike), it had a full service and most of its service history, it came with one of those wonderful Abba stands that mounts in the swingarm pivot for ease of use (I've now got two) and best of all it came with a shock that had seen just 500 miles of use, so it's as good as new old stock and would be worth around a ton, I reckon.

I've had the thing about six months now and done just under 1000 miles on her – about the same amount the previous owner did on her in the previous four years. The reason I didn't want to immediately (again) trumpet my latest purchase was that you'd all think I was a mind-changing prat (again). But this one is a keeper. I promise. There isn't that much to do to the RR-V other than enjoy riding it, but there are plenty of niggles that I need to address, mainly in the depths of winter when I generally go into hibernation riding-wise.

If you check out the official Honda shot of my colour scheme, you'll see that the wheels should be gloss black. And I want them to be gloss black. So when I'm not intending to use the bike over winter I will be whipping the wheels off and getting them back to an original finish. I don't like the silver wheels.

As much as I like the rorty noise of the Yoshimura RS-3 can, it leaks a little moisture so I want to get the original end can on it too. If you see the picture you'll notice the can isn't in too bad a shape, but close inspection shows surface rust and scratches. If anyone knows how to get



Nice, but some stickers need attention.



How she should look with black wheels.



Nissin brakes are brilliant.



Yosh RS-3 adds bark.

Best Blade?

Well, maybe. Kinda. If you're a purist you'd want to have one of the first Blades, the RR-N or P. This was the original 893cc model that was updated into the 'foxe' version (with mild mods to suspension and gearbox), which then transformed itself into the slightly less wild and more easier-going RR-T and V with 918.5cc engine and more comfy ergonomics. By the time the RR-X/W came onto the scene in 1998, the R1 was kicking its butt.

rid of surface imperfections while keeping the brushed finish, do let me know!

Maybe it's time to invest in a wire-wheel and bench grinder? Yeah, I know...

I don't have one. I could buy an end-can on eBay for £30 but I doubt it would be any better than what I already have and James Whitham says bench grinders and wire-wheel cleaning and buffing is therapeutic...

The fork bottoms are stone-chipped too, so I want to try and get those back to standard. That seems to me to be another job to do when the wheels are away being painted and I may just take the forks out, sort out the bottoms and get new springs/oil in there, like Andy Bolas has done on his Bandit 1200 on page 88. When I took this bike around Anglesey (slowly) the front didn't feel too good and I think it's just showing its age a little, so new springs and oil along with that NOS shock should do the business.

Honda's legendary build quality has a few things to answer for. I've found quite a few parts that really didn't seem to last the course of the bike's storage for a good few years. The top fairing stay has flaked and is rusting a tad. As are a few other brackets and the water pump cover. It's easy enough take those parts off when the bike is up on jacks and wheel-less, rub those parts down/strip them and repaint them myself. It's one of the few things I'm good at!

Another thing that does annoy me is the tail-unit graphic on the right-hand side. For some reason this shiny decal is pitted and scratched – perhaps from a set of throw-over panniers, so I want to get that sorted. Sadly, they look hard to copy – but I'm guessing anything can be done these days. So, that lot and a standard screen will just about do me, I think. **cm**

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Project Kawasaki GPZ900R *part 1*

Geepers Creepers

A sober bike purchase? What on earth is happening at Chez Bertie?



It had to happen. A summer garage clean-up-and-out leaves room for more bikes – the successful sale of my GSX-R750 SRAD liberates some funds and I'm at a loose end one evening.

Now, while a number of my more foolish purchases have been made while under the influence, the widely-embraced 'Stoptober' kick the booze campaign saw me dry as a budgie's cage throughout the month and yet still I bought a shonky old bike with aid of my iPad.

What was I thinking? Well, firstly I've always admired Kawasaki's GPz (later GPZ) 900R. It was a bike of which a poster adorned my adolescent boudoir: 'Who can catch a Kawasaki?' Finally, I have caught one.

Regular readers will remember that last year we began a search for an old ratty GPz to try and turn into a Top Gun replica. Yes, despite many people thinking it was the 750, it's now largely accepted that Tom Cruise as Pete 'Maverick' Mitchell, rode a 900R in the film. Many replicas have been made, complete with Navy

Fighter Squadron badges and Kawasaki-less flanks. Now, for whatever reason the CMM Top Gun project foundered, but the gripes and moans from certain readers continued, with more than a sarcastic jape or comment as to why we never took the plunge. So when I saw G8 6XWS up on a popular auction site running at around 500 nicker, I decided to place a cheeky bid.

My new search technique on eBay was to refine my search for bikes near me and ending soon or just having begun: so you save money with pick-up or snap up a bargain. At £500 I was the top bidder for

a while but then she started to slip away. I kept telling myself to stick at my £700 limit, but a few questions to the owner, Steve and looking at the pictures won me over. Sure, it wasn't one of the popular first models, it wasn't even one of the better later models (A7/A8 with 17in front, bigger forks and twin-pot Tokico brakes) but it was an unloved A6 in black and gold – surely a blank canvas to work on?

A quick dabble on www.gpzzone.co.uk showed me what I had heard rumours of: some crazy, crackpot specials builders in the UK and abroad had built some



Should I go green?



Or revert to red?



Owner Steve about to kiss her goodbye.



New calipers, old discs.



MIVV cans were popular.

gorgeous updated and uprated GPZ900R specials. This bike could be transmogrified into something much better than standard.

It was probably this whole 'what might be' that saw me up my offer. Garn if I don't end up winning the thing. Thankfully, it was just 15 miles away in Northampton and seller Steve is over the moon that I've got plans for the bike: "I've had it a few years and it's honest enough and has a full year's MoT. I've just not really used it in the last three years or so as I have a mint GPZ500S with just 5600 miles that I get about on."

Wow: full MoT, no history as such, but plenty of good points: the MoT doesn't mean so much as the thing will be coming apart asap, and Steve mentions new calipers front and rear (the piddly single-pot ones) but hey, if I'm modifying they can be sold on.

I insure the bike and get everything legal for when I pick the thing up – it's got a full MoT after all. When I finally see the bike I can see the black paint means it looks better in the pictures. All of the decals are shot and the paint is faded, crazed and scratched. It's gutting it's not a more desirable early red or green model and as James Whitham says in a text back when I send him a picture: "They're hard to restore I've heard and the 1989 colours were all shit!" I get his point, but I kinda like the colours. But this will be a full respray, re-decal and the various bodywork and engine badges need to be replaced.

Other things too: Where the frame peeps out near the headstock is some mild surface rust. One of the caps on the forks has walked leaving a rusty adjuster. All the bolts on the carbs and ancillaries are



Cockpit has seen better days.

suffering rust, save for those new calipers. The engine needs blasting and painting too. This thing has clearly been outside at some point in its life. Every bolt needs to come off and be cleaned or replaced. It's a full nut and bolt job, this. Bugger.

C'mon Bert, the good points. Well, it's complete. All indicators are standard and the exhausts are the popular replacement MIVV exhausts. They don't look too bad, just with some end-can rust I could clean off. Time to saddle up for a steady ride home and it's running nicely at tickover, so it all bodes well. Steve is keen to see the bike go to a good home and get sorted in one way or another, and that's always a good sign so I wave him goodbye with the promise that I will keep him posted.

People told me I was risking it not taking a trailer to pick the GPZ up – but I really wanted to ride it. It had an MoT after all. Now, much as I love the GPZ, last time I rode one (all of 20 years ago) I wondered what all the fuss was about. Although truth be told I was a bit of a FireBlade fanatic at the time. Well, blow



As has this motor!

me if the bike didn't handle rather nicely. I was pretty surprised to be honest. And then I hit the brakes. Jeez... how it could have passed an MoT is a mystery to me. New calipers it may have, but I bet the discs and lines need replacing.

Then it happened. Cough, splutter, fart, wheeze from 6000rpm: got to be gummed up carbs. I pull over and check the tank. I can see the rust. Bugger. I limp to within a couple of miles on my destination as the bike seems to clear then splutter again. Finally the battery cries enough and I coast to a halt next to an overflowing layby bin. This juxtaposition isn't wasted on me. I get picked up by a mate and roll the bike into my garage.

Am I gutted? Nah, not a bit of it: this bike is coming apart and I've had a taste of what she has to offer. My only decision is what to do with her. I could restore her fully as she is in this colour, or upgrade and do something whacky, or simply restore but have a better colour scheme. Or go the Top Gun route.

Well, what would you do? **cmm**



Project Suzuki X7 *part 5*

The final furlong!

He's been busy and the projects are starting to stack up – time to get the X7 sorted then. WORDS AND PICS: JAMES WHITHAM



It's been a busy couple of months for me as far as bikes are concerned.

I've been commenting most weekends for Eurosport, then competing (making a fool of myself) in the odd local trials event if I get a weekend off, also instructing on the last of my 2015 track-training days, but still finding time to hole up inside my workshop with the Absolute 80s radio station playing and get on with a project or two.

I've bought another couple of race bikes too: a nice little 1988 TZ250 Yamaha and a hardly-run from new 1990 RS250 Honda. This bike particularly I can't wait to crack on with, firstly 'coz it's my maiden Honda restoration, and secondly it's done so little and is so honest it's like a two-wheeled time capsule, the way you rarely find 'em.

Anyway, back to the project in hand. The X7 is coming on really well and apart

from the bodywork it's sat on the bench more or less done. The carbs have been totally stripped and their outer aluminium parts minted. Because the bike was such a good runner (only 4000 miles from new) before I started to restore it I decided not to go to the bother of getting them sonically cleaned but instead take my good mate Jamie's advice. Jamie is, in my opinion, one of the best Japanese bike restorers in the country and he said carbs generally come up well using 'Wonder Wheels', this stuff you get from Halfords. It's made, for the most part I think of acid, and is meant to be diluted and used to clean alloy wheels but used neat with a brush it brings carbs up like new. It's like magic, honest! Check out the picture.

If you're gonna try this though make sure you have a sink or bucket of warm soapy water ready so when you get the part you're working on to the right finish you can immediately drop it in to the water to

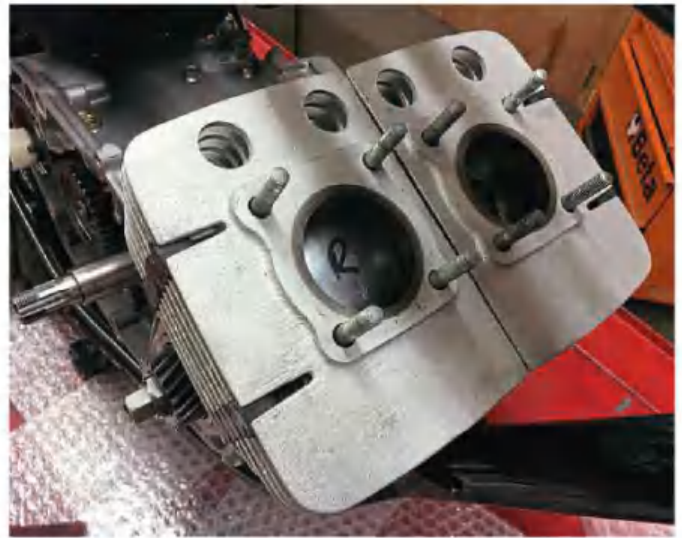


Ribbed meant 'fun' in yer teens!

Simple solutions: Try not to be sidetracked by other projects! Err...



Clean carbs – but how James?



Top-end going on.



Engine and gearbox are ready.



Gearbox is in!



Easy way to get discs looking new.

neutralise the acid. If you leave the solution on too long the ally can go a bit dark. Also, wear rubber gloves coz this stuff is strong. I'm no chemist but I reckon if you were trying to, let's say, dispose of a body then 50 bottles of this and a tin bath would do the job! Not guilty m'lud!

The wheels have come up really well too. Of all the jobs to be done, I was least looking forward to doing the wheels. They've a different shaped spoke but manufactured exactly the same way as a Yamaha LC wheel (and I've done a few of them), in fact it wouldn't surprise me if an X7 wheel and an LC wheel were made in the same factory and supplied to Suzuki and Yamaha by the same out-sourced firm.

In the original manufacturing process they're cast, then coloured, then turned in a lathe to expose bare aluminium on the rims and the outside of the spokes. The best way I've found to get something like an original look is to strip the bearings



She'll look just as good underneath the side-panels.

Simple solutions: With anything like painting wheels: preparation is everything.



Brakes stripped for sorting.



Clean, paint and seals needed.



Bodywork looks mint!



The secret to carb cleaning!



Front-end looks fab!



Good masking did this.

out, get the wheels vapour blasted so the rims and spoke outers look like new, then mask off these sections and repaint the rest... simples: but bloody fiddly! It took me a full morning to mask up each wheel cutting the excess tape off with a Stanley blade as I went. The result looks spot-on though.

The front brake was the next job on the list. A relatively simple process this, of taking the whole system completely apart, removing the old paint from the master cylinder and caliper with paint stripper then repainting with, in this case satin black, and then reassembling with new seals. The nylon reservoir that is sealed with an O-ring to the master cylinder can be brought back to white (time and brake fluid makes 'em go yellow) by leaving it submerged in bleach overnight. You can do all the white plastic and nylon parts, like the two-stroke tank this way.

I used a flexible abrasive wheel pad in a drill to clean up the disc. If you're careful you can get something like the look of a new disc but to be honest if you can find a new one it'll look better, but then where do you stop with NOS parts? And remember, if you're going to run the bike when it's done the new one will soon wear and look like the old one, so it's a waste of dosh anyway!

Wiring looms can be tricky to make look mint and new ones are usually difficult to get hold of and expensive. All I've done in this case is clean up the old loom the best



A selection of Whitham project parts for fresh paint!

I can with thinners on a cloth, and it looks fair. If the original shrink-wrap has gone hard and cracked it will have usually done this around the headstock where it is exposed and been made to flex when the handlebars are moved. The best way to sort this is to fit some more shrink wrap but to be honest it never looks the same as the original stuff and it's also tricky to fit because most times you have to remove the terminal blocks to slide it over the wires: 'tin' and 'worms' spring to mind!

Another sneaky way of fixing up a cracked piece of loom-wrap is to warm the bad part with a hair dryer to make it flexible, trim the broken piece out with scissors, being careful not to damage the wires inside, so you have two straight

ends, then slide one end neatly over the top of the other. You'll never see the join when the bike is done. It'll mean that more of the wires will be exposed at one end or the other but these will be hidden either in the headlight or under the tank.

I've gone for an authentic looking 'ribbed' type front tyre, so I'll have to remember not to get frisky if I ever ride the bike or it'll hurt! All that's needed to finish the job off now is to pick up the bodywork from the blokes at Spraybay, bleed the brake, fit the seat, throw some oil 'n' fuel in and see if she runs! You never quite know, but with this bike I'm quietly confident and I don't have many bits left over so that's always a good sign! I will keep you posted. **cm**



WORDS AND PICS: BERTIE SIMMONDS

Project Kawasaki ZX-10 *part 1*

A practical sportsbike?

Can it be possible to get something fast, fun and practical for under a grand?



We buy bikes for many reasons, maybe we had one back in the day, or we wanted one as a kid.

But, although many of us buy a modern classic for different reasons it's fair to say that when we have one in our grasp, most of the time the bike will be pampered, cosseted, looked-after and won't do anything like the miles it would have when it was new. Dave Brooking thinks differently.

Now, you may remember Dave from a while back as he is building (eventually) a Suzuki GSX1100EFE. Running his own roofing company means he's normally up a ladder somewhere, but while the EFE is coming along slowly, he wanted something he could use day in, day out. He says: "My son loves coming out on the back of a bike with me, but as he's getting older (and bigger) I realised that I needed

something a bit more substantial than the ZX-7R I was using. We go off to bike races together and visiting relatives, so I figured I'd look around."

Unbeknownst to Dave, Niall was checking out eBay himself to find something with the required seat. Dave says: "Niall spotted this ZX-10 and said 'it looks good dad', and it reminded me of my time on one back in the day. The ZX-10 in this colour was the first bike I was ever on the back of. I was in a pub in Ilford, Essex, in the late 1980s and a guy I worked with had a blue and silver GPz900R Kawasaki and it was beautiful it was. One day he came in and raved about this bike he'd bought – a ZX-10. I was mesmerised as it was a beast. I was about 20 at the time – so I was a late starter (I've now raced and do lots of miles on the road) but it must have been the first model and about 1988. Well, he offered to give me a lift home on it the next week.

He threw me on the back, he threw me a nasty lid to wear and we were off. What a journey: down the road, between buses, over bridges at speed. I was hanging on for dear life and when I threw my leg off the bike my legs turned to jelly and I collapsed. I loved it. That was me hooked on bikes and many Kawasakis too: I've had a GPz before (750 and a 900) and I've loved ZX-7Rs."

What son Niall loved about the look of this G-reg ZX-10 was the seat: nice and level so he's not perched up high – pillion comfort is paramount. Dave says: "I put a bid on and eventually I paid £831.25 which wasn't too untoward for a bike with 32k on the clocks. And it looked good when we picked it up. Brian, the seller, had cleaned it and it had a few marks on the fairing, but you expect that from a bike that is more than 25 years old. She fired up lovely, ticked over, after screaming on choke – typical Kawasaki."



All pretty clean and ship-shape around the E-box frame.



Exhaust is a still-game Motad.

You got the good buying vibes from Brian from the off: the kettle was singing as we arrived, the bike was clean and you could see a modern Honda Hornet and a lathe in his garage. Looking over the bike, it was in tremendous nick. Sure, the paint was flaking off the wheels, but on the whole this was a well-looked after rocketship.

Rocketship? Yup. When launched in 1988 the ZX-10 was the fastest machine out there, its 997cc four-cylinder motor was developed from the GPz900R and 1000RX and produced a claimed 125-135bhp and up to 165mph. It wasn't a lightweight (245 kilos) but the 'Tomcat' as it was known in some circles, pointed the way to 1990's ZZ-R1100 and later ZZ-R12 and even today's ZZ-R1400.

With such brute power, it's a shame certain things are lacking. Dave: "Brian advertised it as having tyres with lots of tread – which was correct – just a shame they were square, old Michelin Macadams. On the ride home the bike was lazy to turn in, then edgy when you started to lean it over: clearly the tyres had to go. The brakes too are iffy and I think they were always wanting back in the 1980s, being only twin calipers, not even opposed calipers. This bike has Goodridge lines on it, but I think it could do with the whole brake system being looked at as it all feels spongy – that's something I shall do."

But first, those tyres had to go. With strange sizes (120/70-17 front and 160/60-18 rear) you don't get quite the normal level of different rubber. Thankfully our friends at Pirelli/Metzeler came to the rescue with their Metzeler Roadtec Interact Z8s. These are developed for sports-touring motorcycles and come in a wide-range of sizes, but with a thoroughly modern construction and compound. We will do a full review in time, but the difference was immediately noticeable. Dave says: "It is like chalk and cheese from the old Michelins and the bike



Goodridge, naff calipers, peeling paint.



We will find out if this works!



Still a pretty looking machine for 800 notes!

suddenly handled. She wasn't going to stick her backside up until we got the Z8s on her. It transforms the bike really. How can people ride on older stuff? It was like being on a knife-edge before and front felt like it was folding. New tyres on and it was a revelation."

So, now the bike feels better, but to make this truly practical, Dave is going to get some form of luggage, maybe a bigger screen and give the bike a full service and

sort those breaks. Then the world is their oyster: "It's a summer long-run bike for Niall and me and we will take it camping and head over to Ireland to see his uncle Niall. Also we plan a two-up trip to Bulgaria in the summer where my uncle has some apartments. I reckon for under a grand this bike will be a practical machine for two-up regular use. Lovely job!" **cmm**

● Do you do classic biking on the cheap? Give us a bell to crow about it!

Stay connected

Making sure your wiring has top-class connections is important if you want to keep your classic running right, says Mark Haycock.



1/ Quick and easy: choc-blocks are actually more meant for mains voltage connections. **2/** Pre-insulated terminals need a crimping tool, but they're popular and easy to fit.



Last time I looked at some electrical work on the TX500 and I mentioned that I needed to remake a few connections, but I did not say how that was done, so let us take a quick look at various options.

There are any number of ways of joining wires and we did see one of them, i.e. solder splices but here we need a connection which is only semi-permanent and can be disjoined and joined again if necessary. Probably the cheapest and quickest way is to use connector strips or 'choc blocks' (Photo 1) which are really meant for fixed mains voltage connections. The only tools you need are a plain screwdriver and wire stripper, and the connections can be made pretty quickly. The disadvantage is that the screw heads are not insulated so that would need to be rectified for safety and of course they are not original but they are generally hidden away. As an experiment I once used these on a project and they worked well for years without any problems.

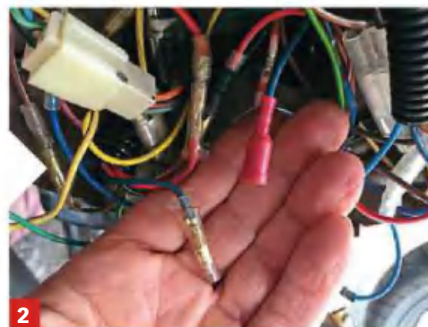
You do often see the type of connector shown in Photo 2 where modifications have been made by previous owners. Known as pre-insulated terminals, they are fitted using a special crimping tool. I think that what makes them popular is the fact that they are quick to fit because, as the name suggests, it is not necessary to fit the insulation separately. I am not a great fan as I think not only are they big and clunky looking, but also because I just

associate them with the shambolic mess which most bikes have for a wiring system after a few decades of previous owners' attention.

There are also any number of other alternatives, but probably the best option of all is to keep things as originally made and for Japanese bikes this is usually a paired connection of two terminals of a particular size and shape, generally described as a 3.9mm Japanese connector, which is useful to know when you are searching for them.

Photo 3 shows the four different components which are needed for a joint. There are one female (socket) and one male (bullet) connector, made in this case of tin-plated brass which both conducts well and is resistant to corrosion. There are also two (different) insulators, made of transparent PVC.

So how is a joint made? We need just two tools, shown in Photo 4. I want to demonstrate that it is possible to use very cheap tools here though better so-called 'professional' or real professional tools are available and are probably easier to use. The wire stripper cost £2 and the crimping tool was £3, and I have used the latter very successfully to make dozens of joints. I must admit though that for some types of tougher insulation the little stripper, though easy to use, cannot cope so I use this one (Photo 5) which was really expensive at eight quid. Taking a close look at a bullet (Photo 6) we can see the



3/ The parts needed for a good 'bullet' joint. **4/** Tools needed include a wire-stripper and a crimping tool: both are cheap as chips.

principle. The wire is held in two ways: the inner core and the outer insulation (and hence core also) are clamped in two separate areas. The core makes the electrical connection and the other clamp helps to act as a back-up, which is particularly helpful if connections are separated by yanking on the wires. The crimping tool has separate clamping areas for different tasks.

We start by putting on the insulating sleeve, with the wider part towards the end of the wire. Now strip just enough insulation for the core clamp and insert the wire like this (Photo 7). By using the odd-shaped part of the tool to form the clamp by curling the tabs over (Photo 8) we are left with this (Photo 9). To be double-sure, use the flat part to squeeze it tight (Photo 10). We grip the wire's insulation using the rounded part, which is used by holding the tabs like this (Photo 11) and the tabs can be folded round with

Simple solutions: Sometimes you have to have the proper tools for the job: but they can be cheap!



5



6



7



8

5/ Haycock splashed out a mighty £8 on this baby. **6/** And this is a bullet connector. **7/** Strip back the insulation and place the exposed wire in like this. **8/** Use the tool to clamp the bullet like this so we can turn the tabs over.



9



10



11

9/ Once you've clamped it, you should be left with something like this ready to turn the tabs over. **10/** To be sure, use the flat part of the tool to squeeze it tight. **11/** Now use this part of the tool to fold the tabs over.



12



13

12/ This should be the end result you see, before you slide the insulation on. **13/** These connectors are used to join multiple wires together. **14/** Blade or spade connectors are also used on things such as flasher relays. **15/** And for 90° connections you use a flag connector.

one on top of the other. Give an extra squeeze in the flat part and the job is nearly complete (Photo 12) as we just have to slide on the insulation and that's it. It sounds a bit fiddly but you get used to it after a few tries.

To be sure of a good contact you could solder the clamped core as well (the tin plating takes the solder well), but this can be a bit tricky and I do not bother now. Honda recommends using silicone grease to make them corrosion-proof, but you can buy special grease called Contralube 770 which is specially formulated for the job. Apparently it does not contain silicone and its composition is a closely-guarded secret.

Other possibilities are where you need to connect one wire to several others and in Photo 13 we see connectors for (one wire to two) and (one wire to three), which have their own specially shaped female insulators. Note that the lower one has a wider core clamping area as it is meant for

heavier gauge wire capable of carrying large currents.

Some electrical components are connected using a different arrangement called either a spade, blade or Lucar connector, as on this flasher relay (Photo 14). The usual type (like this) is referred to as being 6.3mm wide, which of course is ridiculous as it is really ¼in. Wider ⅜in and narrower types are available for different applications. You might need to form the corresponding female connector on a wire and the same technique is used as for the bullet connectors.

For connecting wires at 90° you use a so-called flag connector. Once again, do not forget to put on the insulation before you fix on the connector, unless you are lucky enough to find this type (Photo 15) which clips on afterwards instead. **cmm**

■ Next time: connections of a different sort altogether.



14



15



WORDS: STEVE PARRISH,
PICTURES: STAVROS,
BERTIE SIMMONDS

Project Yamaha FZ750 *part 8*

SHOWSTOPPER!

Stavros thinks this is part 8, but then it's been so long, who knows?

It's been another hectic year for me so I apologise now for not keeping you guys fully abreast of what's been happening with my project.

As you may recall, it was way back in early 2013 that I bought a C-reg, 1986 Yamaha FZ750 for a grand in a bid to bring back the halcyon days of my final year or two of racing by building a replica of my old Loctite Superstocker. I say replica, but homage (said in a French accent) would be more to the point as I wanted something that looked the part, even if it benefited from modern bits and pieces in certain areas.

This time last year we were getting the bike painted up in the original FZ colours, but it still lacked a pukka exhaust and brakes and it made a splash at Motorcycle Live with a borrowed exhaust (thanks Steve Adams) and standard brakes. Well, now we've got the bike two steps further on. She now has a wonderful Gibson pipe on her, like the original bikes had and Harrison Billet brakes fitted.

Back in May, Bertie the editor sent me pictures of the pipe that Gibson had created. Well, what an amazing piece of work. Tony Greenslade there said the pipe was re-created from original sketches and photos as no jigs survived. All I can say is that if you want a decent pipe for your FZ, go straight to Gibsons – web address on the page opposite.

Brakes were a bit of an issue. We had a great offer from Harrison Billet to use some of their superb (British) six-pot brake calipers, but the wheels we had weren't stock. We went for a mix of FZR600/EXUP 1000 front/rear wheels to get wider rubber on 17in rims. The FZ original front disc set-up is something like a 270mm pair (and even 270mm at the rear) while of course we had 300mm ones up front, courtesy of Galfer (see the 'thank you' box for details). We managed to get the whole lot to fit thanks to IDP Moto and the irrepressible Darryll Young getting some plates to make 'em fit. He even finished it all off with some nice cap-end black Allen



It's been a while but Stavros has not been idle.



Gibson found original drawings.



Tony's pics helped recreate the zorst.



Galespeed levers over stock.



K&N filters: lovely!



Gibson's art!



Doesn't she look good at the Stafford Show?

bolts to make it look period, even if the anchors are thoroughly modern. Venhill lines (originally going to a certain RD350LC project) finished the job at the front. We are using the original rear disc for now, but this may change before it hits the track.

Then it's been about finishing bits off. K&N Stack Filters, Galespeed levers/ master cylinders really set the bike off. The levers especially are works of art and so much lighter and niftier than the Yamaha originals. Remember, this isn't a period-perfect build: I always wanted it to be a mix of old and new and there's something distinctly cool about upgrading a modern classic, isn't there?

The bike has been running but we need to iron out some bugs, obviously, but that will now happen in the New Year as we have another deadline to hit. Those of you who went to last year's Motorcycle Live would have seen the bike there, then it was in its current form at Stafford on the CMM stand but another version will be ready for the 2015 Motorcycle Live Show

at Birmingham's NEC at the end of November/start of December.

You'll recall we had two sets of bodywork, well, I began the project looking at which paint-job to go with: the 1985 almost-standard silver/red with Loctite stickers as you see here, or a full-on 1986 (if I recall) fully-faired Loctite red beastie, which was a very handsome machine. As I dictate this, the second set of bodywork and spare tank (sourced on eBay) is now with the wonderful Paul Corwen at KAS Racepaint, who has been brilliant all project long, so we hope to have everything ready to have the bike resplendent in Loctite colours at the show, so come along to the main stage to see it.

After that it will be Christmas and New Year and some fine-tuning then I for one can't wait for the green shoots of spring as Editor Bertie has promised to give us a full road test on the bike alongside a standard machine, probably at Stowe circuit at Silverstone. Who wants to come along and watch? **cmm**

THANK YOU

It's a long list! Thank you all!

- Colin Peabody at Performance Parts Ltd for Galfer discs, K&N filters, Galespeed levers and accoutrements.
www.performanceparts-ltd.com
- Tony Greenslade and Gibson Exhausts:
www.gibsonexhausts.co.uk
- Janine and Peter Jarrett at Harrison BILLET: www.billet.co.uk
- Harris Performance:
www.harris-performance.com
- www.yamaha-motor.eu/uk/services/genuine-parts/index.aspx
- Darryll Young and Craig Prior at:
www.idpmoto.com
- Paul Corwen at KAS Racepaint:
www.kasracepaint.co.uk
- Ben Diaper at:
www.dynamicgraphix.co.uk
- Mid Norfolk Mouldings:
www.midnorfolk mouldings.co.uk
- Dan Sager and Venhill Engineering for the brake-lines: www.venhill.co.uk
- Paul Berryman for a seat cowl.

Q&A



Benelli 2C Phantom

Q: I am having problems trying to find a set of standard piston rings for a Benelli 250cc 2C Phantom. I have tried several websites with no luck. Can anybody out there help?

Harry Duffield

A: Yes, I can see this might be a problem. However if you look at eBay, particularly the US (.com) site you will see quite a few listings for Phantom parts. In fact, as I look right now I can see a listing for a pair of new standard sized pistons including rings, so the parts are out there!



1980 Yamaha XS400SE

Q: Well I'm truly stumped with this bike, I have no idea what is going on with it or what is causing the sooted plug on the left-hand pot and which I think goes hand-in-hand with the inability to rev cleanly beyond 4k revs: every ignition component has been replaced and where possible swapped with the right hand pot to no effect. I still end up with a

sooted plug! I have: renewed plugs (several times), points, condensers, coils, HT leads and HT caps. On the carbs I have: renewed float valves, and all jets in the left-hand carb. The diaphragms are perfect, both slides operate cleanly and in harmony and the carbs have been balanced. Air filters have been renewed (even tried running without them to no effect) the choke mechanism has been checked and functioning as it should. The needle clip is at slot four, from the top. Additionally the points gaps are spot-on at 14 thou, timing (bulb lights exactly on LF and RF point), valve gaps are okay and compression on both sides is indicating 150psi. The bike starts on the button, ticks over nicely and runs well below 4000rpm!

George

A: It sounds like a carburettor problem to me, in that the sooty plug is showing excessive richness. I take it that this only manifests itself when larger throttle openings are used and this would point to the main jet or needle jet assembly being incorrect. The main jet is supposed to be a 135, and am I right that you have just fitted a brand new one that cannot have been damaged by being prodded with a piece of wire? There should be a metal washer between it and the carburettor body, if it makes any difference. Otherwise maybe the needle or needle jet are incorrect. You might try swapping over the various bits between the carbs to see if it makes a difference. You fitted a new O-ring with the replacement float valve assembly of course? You might be able to rig up a piece of clear pipe connected to the drain screw hole to check that the fuel levels are the same. Lastly, are you sure the choke mechanism really is working correctly so the plunger is shutting off the passageway fully?



1989 Honda CBR1000F-K

Q: I have a 1989 Honda CBR1000F-K and its looks are spoiled by a scuffed round right-hand engine cover. It appears not to have a part number that I can find anywhere, even my Haynes Manual gives nothing away. Can you help point me at someone who might know how to replace this?

Stephen Guy-Clarke

A: You could try to respray it using a special colour-matched paint from RS or similar, but in my experience the match is not perfect. The simplest solution though is just to buy new parts, as these are still available as Honda spares at a total cost of about £40. Ask your dealer for: 11311-MZ2-610 Cover, right, crankcase, 11396-MW3-601 Gasket, right cover

YOUR TIPS!


FIRE-FIGHTING!

Help me save the FireStorms! I read your September article about the VTR 1000F and it reminded me about some necessary advice for owners. These bikes need to have their camchain tensioners fixed otherwise sooner or later they will break, the camchain jump and the engine becomes a total wreck. It is a small spring that breaks and that lets the tensioner back off, up to 20mm. It is not sufficient to change CCTs at regular intervals as they break at random, some after a very short period other only after long term. A common fix is to replace with a mechanical tensioner and while it fixes this problem it introduces other. They are difficult to set at the right tension and it will always be wrong either cold or warm and need regular adjustment. There is a fairly simple modification that lets you retain the automatic adjustment while preventing fatal failures. By introducing a small rod inside the CCT you can prevent it from backing off more than a few mm when the spring snaps and you will save the engine. The fix is described here: <http://www.vtr1000.org/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?t=19416>. And by the way, the VTR vacuum carbs don't work with K&N filters, at all. Keep the stock type and have a smoother ride.


Bengt Bjorck


Send your queries to: bsimmonds@mortons.co.uk or write to Problem Solver, CMM, PO Box 99, Horncastle, Lincs LN9 6LZ

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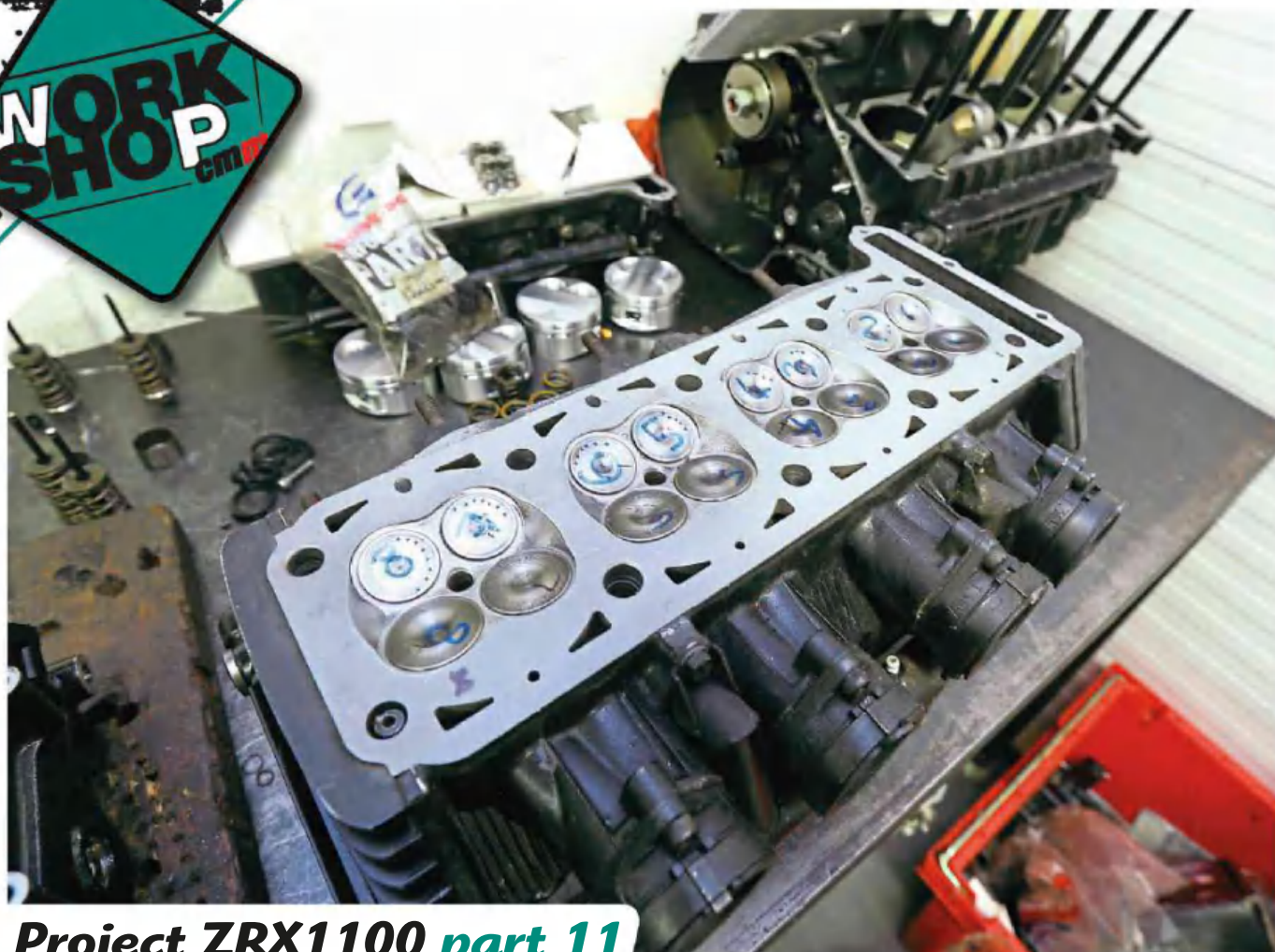
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Project ZRX1100 *part 11*

Engine 'ere!

Last time was all about the ZRX frame renovation, but this month Al's been back on the engine front, trying to get the ZRX lump together so he can begin the turbo install. It's not been plain sailing though...

WORDS AND PHOTOS: ALAN DOWDS



Regular readers (all of you I hope!) may remember where we were last time down at Big CC's engine building room.

We'd got the forged Chinese con rods bolted onto the crank, fitted and checked all the bearing shells, and bolted the cases together.

Sean at Big CC picked up a base spacer plate to reduce the compression, and we'd taken the Wiseco pistons to Axis machining to get the piston crowns machined down, further increasing the volume of the combustion chamber, and thus reducing the compression ratio. That's essential for a turbo engine to avoid pre-ignition, overheating and detonation.

The next job was to assemble the cylinder head. I'd stripped out the valves and cleaned and lapped them into the

head, now we had to refit them. First up we needed to fit new valve stem oil seals, that are vital to keep excess oil from the top-end out of the combustion chamber, as the camshafts and valve rocker gear are bathed in copious amounts of engine oil to keep them all running smoothly.



From left: Wrong seal, new seal, old seal.

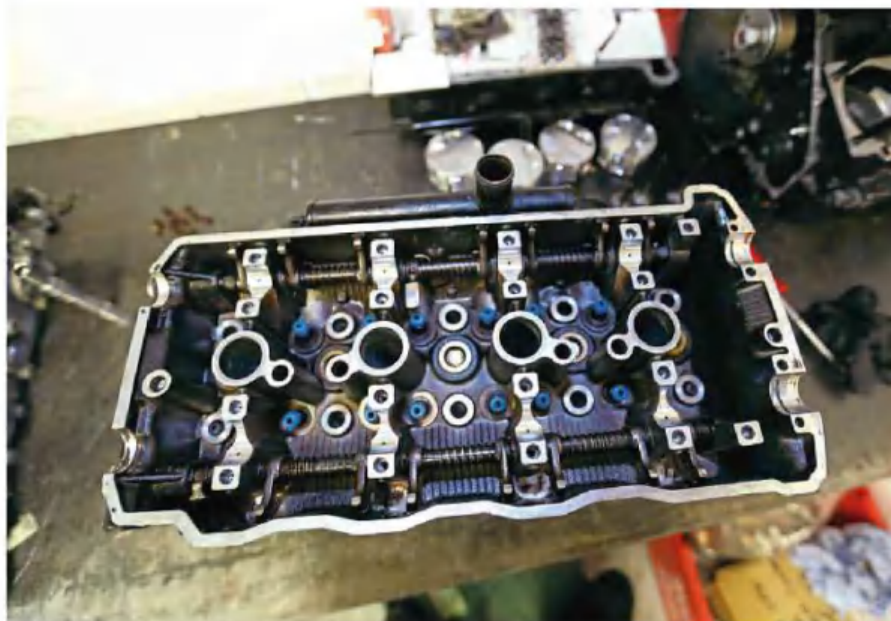
The little valve stem seals sit around the stem of each of the 16 valves, stopping most of the oil running down the valve and into the combustion chamber (although some people reckon they let a small amount of oil through to lube the valve guides). I'd sourced 16 new seals from



New seals going in.



Ivan (Sean's son) helps out.



Seals all sorted and done! Thanks Ivan. Small hands help!

Kawasaki, so I started to pull the old seals off the top of the valve guides, and pushed the new ones into place. But wait! It turns out there was a mistake in my order and the new seals were the wrong ones... Gah!

Two weeks later, having picked up a set of the correct seals, we get stuck in again. I've got a helper this time – Ivan Mills, son of Big CC owner Sean, was in the shop and he offered to help me out. He whipped out the old seals in a trice, and slipped the new, blue, Viton ones into place. Ivan then inserted each valve back into the correct spot, and we got cracking with the springs.

I'd not installed a set of poppet valves in a cylinder head in a long, long time! But the principles are simple enough – use the valve spring compressor tool to clamp the valve, spring and spring retainer, push the spring down far enough to reveal the groove in the end of the valve. Carefully place the two retainer collets either side of the valve stem, then gently release the spring pressure, and the retainer is locked into place on the valve stem. Repeat 15 times, with a tea break or two as you go along...

Satisfied with the head job, it was time for the pistons and block. Sean showed me how to fit the three piston rings into place, with the end gaps spaced round



A finished valve spring.



Idiot uses compressor on the collets.



Compressor in place on the valve.



Piston rings being put in place.



Piston rings fitted!



Fitting the first piston circlips.

the circumference. Then, I fitted one circlip into the gudgeon pin hole, fitted the piston onto the small end of the con rod, slid the gudgeon pin through, and carefully squeezed the other circlip into place. Repeat three more times.

Now came the tricky bit. Fitting the block onto the pistons means compressing all the piston rings, and carefully feeding each piston into its bore. Get it wrong, and you can break a ring, or damage the bore. You can get special piston ring compressor tools, but Sean's done it so many times, all he needs is a small screwdriver. First up, the bore gets a generous coating of clean engine oil. Then he positions each ring end carefully, so when he slips the block down and gently rocks each piston into the bore, all he has to do is push the rings into their grooves. It's a painstaking process, and if the block feels like it's stuck at any time, there's a chance something isn't right. Start with the two inner pistons, then turn the crankshaft slowly to bring the block down and the outer pistons up. Repeat the gentle insertion for these, and we're done!

But something's not quite right. We want to spin the crankshaft, to see the lovely Wiseco pistons rattling up and down the bores. But the crank won't turn completely. It'll go so far in each direction, but then stop. Aaargh!

I can't understand it – the crank was spinning fine before. But Sean thinks he knows the problem: "It would turn before because the pistons weren't holding the con rods in place. I bet one of the con rod bolt heads is fouling the crankcases."

There was nothing for it but to split the crankcases again. We left the barrels in place, unbolted the cases, flipped the



Spacer baseplate gets spray-on gasket sticky stuff.

engine over, and took the bottom case off. Sure enough, there was a small witness mark, where the taller, thicker big-end bolt head on number one cylinder was touching the inner crankcase. I'm pretty peeved, but Sean is confident he can sort it. There's enough material in the cases to let us gently remove some alloy, and give enough clearance for the bolt head.

Three steps forward then, and one step back. Ah well. If this stuff was easy, everyone would be doing it all the time, eh?

We're within touching distance of a finished motor though, I can feel it in my water! **cmm**



And this be it.



Spacer baseplate in and we're ready to slide the head on.

Rex Rampant!

We touched upon the ZRX a few months back, so here's a refresher. Three versions made it out there: a naked, round-headlight 'N' version, a half-faired 'S' launched in 2001 (more of a sports tourer) and the ZRX1100R, which was launched in 1997.

All models used the water-cooled 1052cc motor from the ZZ-R1100 and detuned it to around 100-110bhp, placing it in a tubular frame, with a braced swingarm and twin Kayaba piggy-back reservoir shocks. In the R version it really looked the business and it's mainly this model that served to seal the bike's popularity. For 2001 the engine capacity went up to 1164cc.

There is something about the ZRX that gives people almost a 'blank canvas' feeling, so it's little wonder that the healthy owners

clubs have a wide array of specials modified in a number of different ways.

The engine is able to handle a lot more horsepower (100-120bhp as standard) and can go to upwards of 150bhp or more depending on whether you want to go with normally aspirated or AI's route with a turbo or a blower.

As a rule of thumb a full-on stage one tune of air filter, jetting changes and a free-flowing pipe should see you with 130bhp and 80ft-lb of torque. That's a nice very reliable tune.

Others go with ZZ-R cams on the 1100 (ZZ-R11 or 12 cams don't fit, but there are aftermarket alternatives) while a big bore is also a popular modification.

Chassis-wise you can change suspension and some specials go for upside-down fork swaps



The ZRX is a great blank canvas for a good special.

and replacement of the Kayaba twin-shocks and/or a change from the tubular swingarm.

Brakes are another popular modification as the six-pot Tokicos can feel a bit outdated if not kept clean. Mild brake mods include updates to pads, lines and the introduction of wavy discs.

If you want to make two important and far-

reaching mods for peanuts to a standard 11 or 12, then change the rear sprocket to a 47T from 45 on the 1100 and 42 to 44T on the 1200 – the result is less top-end and more low-down punch.

Then, spin the eccentric chain adjusters forward (180 degrees) get the bike sitting up and shorten the wheelbase a tad. Et voila! See below for a few useful websites.



Head oiled ready to go on.



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Useful people!

- www.zrxocboard.com
- www.pdq1.com
- www.bigccracing.com
- www.jesterstrickbits.co.uk
- www.kwickstand.net



Feeding in the pistons..



The block is on. Phew!



Something clearly wasn't right.



Here is the culprit!



Witness mark is very visible.

Pipe dreams!

...are now a reality for our Niall as he's only gone and found bona fide rocking horse poo!

WORDS AND PHOTOS: NIALL MACKENZIE

Call it cosmic ordering, patience or simply being pure dead jammy, the fact is, I now own a pair of extremely rare RD400 pipes with the coveted '2R9' stamped on the inside rear.

This discovery is all the more amazing as it came during a chance conversation while on a ride out in the Highlands, with old friend and one-time Niall Mac helmet painter Ali Grant. Ali owns and runs the very successful Bike Paints Co up in Cupar Muir and happened to mention he might have some old RD silencers and downpipes gathering dust in his workshop. He said they were far from perfect but I was welcome to them if they helped with the rebuild. Help with the rebuild? I wanted to marry him!

The truth was that before the Scottish trip I had given up pipe searching and decided my only option was to go with refurbishing my tatty black Codnor expansion chambers. Personally, I'd never heard the name before but these were made by Codnor Light Engineering, which was based in Long Eaton in the Nineties. I'm sure in the grand scheme of things they would still have looked (and sounded) pretty good but I'm a stickler for keeping things standard so I'm now an extremely happy man. A few days later my boxed up pipes from Fife arrived, and apart from surface rust and a few light dings, I was delighted to find that they were reasonably intact.

I was aware Mr Whitham had some nice ladies that do a bit of chroming up north, but they have bulging order books and a long turnaround time so I went in search of a quicker and more local option. Another friend (and yes I have at least two), pig farmer and all-round bike nut Pete Elliot, led me to New Era Restorations in Coalville, which in turn recommended chromer Aaron Walkinshaw

Nice, long shiny pipes make Niall happy!



Sparkly and spanking.



In need of work these ones were.

in Coventry. For straightforward chroming he normally needs four weeks, however, my pipes took a few days longer as they went via his 'Tinnie'. For a few quid extra this chap magically removes scuffs and fills in dings before the shiny stuff is applied. It is money well spent, as you can see in the before and after pictures.

In other news I'm very excited as my 400F rebuild has officially begun. It is early days but two-stroke addicts Dave Yates and Tim Ward have started helping me to reassemble my many tubs of bits. At the moment we have a skeleton on the bench but will slowly continue to piece together the puzzle over the coming weeks. I've already replaced anything unsightly or obviously unusable such as the tank cap, rear mudguard, handlebars, indicators and seat. That said, I'll no doubt be visiting the very excellent www.yambits.co.uk for odds and sods over the coming weeks. Parts like the chain adjusters came back cleaned up from Redditch Shotblasters but still have a rough appearance after a fair amount of buffing, so they will be replaced. I've also been using Norbo at rdlcrazy.co.uk who has a decent selection of original and patented air-cooled parts on his website.

His prices are competitive and while my best find there was my aftermarket 400F seat, we did have to return a pair of rear shocks that didn't quite fit.

My recent Pro-Am race flurry at Silverstone gave me a fantastic opportunity to test tyres for my RD. After trying out a few brands we settled on Continental Classic Attacks as the tyre for our

one-make series revival, so that's what's now gracing my beautifully refurbished rims. They came highly recommended by J Whitham, who claimed he had a few mates hooning round on them in the Classic scene with a decent amount of success. I first tested them on LCs at the Donington Classic Event and then again over the race weekend at Silverstone. ➔



Rusty number 2R9 tells you all you need to know.



And now not so rusty! Result!



Blatant T-shirt plug, but the RD is coming together.



Frame paint beats the colour in came in!

I'll admit to having a few moments but I soon realised the limiting factor was the Eighties suspension and not the tyres. Even as an ancient ex-racer (or am I current again?) I like to push close to the limit so I really liked the Contis, as they gave good feel even when the suspension had said enough is enough. The rear hardly moved but the front would judder as the rubber delivered more grip than the forks could cope with. At both circuits I lost the front on more than one occasion but stayed on. Back in the day we hadn't even heard of radial motorcycle tyres so the grip and angles of lean I can carry now is way beyond what was possible in 1983.

The ultimate test came when the rain arrived on race day at Silverstone. A sighting lap and a warm-up lap were the sum total of our wet testing before it was time to lay things on the line for the race. This time it was the front that didn't move but the rear was a bit skiddy accelerating off the slower corners. There was still plenty of feel and I was never close to jumping off, so overall I'm giving them a big thumbs up.

Next on the agenda is to sort out my badly chipped forks stations. Big Dave is on the case so we are expecting them to land back from hard chromers AM Philpot in Luton any day now. Once we have these we can quickly have a rolling chassis on the bench and get stuck into finishing the job off, hopefully in time for this month's Stafford Show or maybe the NEC.

I'll attempt a detailed list of costs of this resto when she is complete, but I already know it hasn't been cheap. So far including the bike, paint, chrome and parts I'm easily up around the £3500 mark, a small price to pay for what should become an awesome object of beauty.

I hope to see you at sunny Stafford. Can someone lend me 50p for a coffee? **cmm**



Engine is ready and Contis sit on the rims.



One last push to get it finished: even if he's missed Stafford!

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Scoop reckons many of us are missing a trick with this iconic learner.

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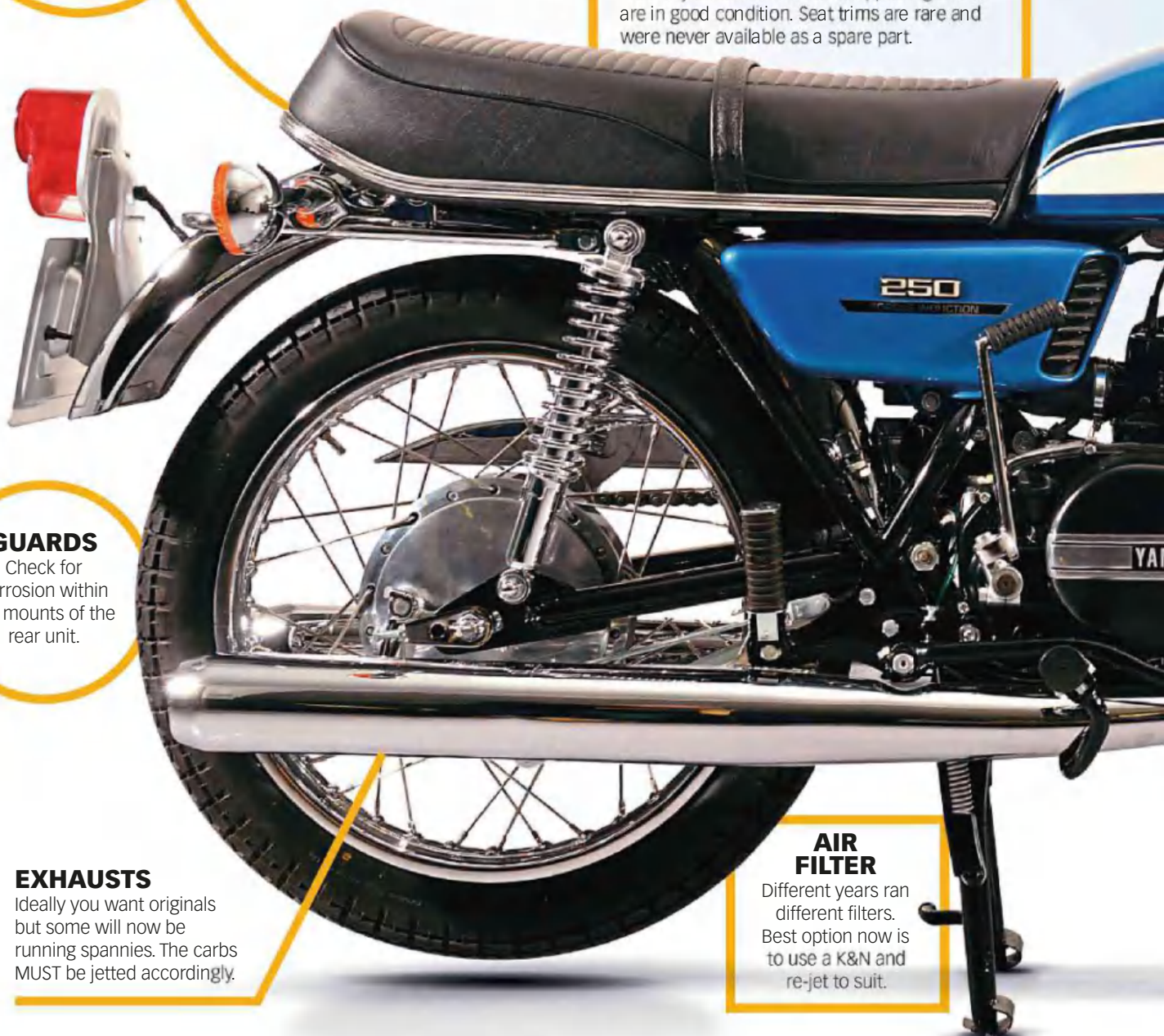
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Different years ran different filters. Best option now is to use a K&N and re-jet to suit.



Heresy: it's a little less than heresy that the best all round learner of the early 1970s has pretty much fallen off the radar.

For a machine that swept all before it during its reign the bike rarely seems to get any coverage today. This leaves the Young Pretender, in the guise of the coffin tanked RD250, to grab all the glory. When Yamaha bolted on a new front end to the outgoing YDS7 and squeezed in some reed valves in front of the carb and into the backs of the cylinders it created a masterpiece. These two additions allied

to a restyling exercise totally transformed a good but understated machine into the class leader. At a stroke the former capacity supremo aka the T250 Hustler/GT250 was transformed into yesterday's news. The RD250 was fast, light, flexible and handled; here was the weapon of choice in two formats from late 1972 through to the arrival of Suzuki's anorexic and frantic X7.

Rarely, if ever, has such an apparently low key makeover proved to be so successful, yet for three glorious years Yamaha's round tanked RD250 really was the bike to own. Countless chip shop duels, youth club contests and high street high jinks would demonstrate just how good the bike was. The addition of reed valves had allowed Yamaha's designers to tweak the porting of the old YDS7 for more top end power while retaining bottom end tractability. Although they were effectively hidden from view, Yamaha added the 'Torque Induction' graphic to the side panels as an oblique reference to the new system. Another unseen engineering enhancement was the continued use of a four bearing crank; something that Yamaha had favoured for years. Although arguably over engineered for average or considerate use, the use of two main bearings per cylinder meant the RD's bottom end ➤

ELECTRICS

Most issues lie with ageing rotors or stators. The three pin block connector below the RHS side panel can overheat with age.

IGNITION

Points and coil system needs to be set up accurately. Alternatively consider an aftermarket system.

GEARBOXES

UK RD250s and 250s came as five speeders with sixth gear blanked off. Many other markets ran six ratios as standard. If you liberate the sixth cog on a restricted bike the final drive ratios may need to be revised.

CARBS

Early models run conventional looking units, later models have a deeper carb top and are known as High Tops. You need one pair of either; not a mixture.

ENGINE

Solid and reliable they can take a lot of abuse if fed decent oil. Main bearings may have suffer after decades of not being used.



What to buy and how much to pay

There's not much on this Japanese classic. The round tank model run is late 72-73 RD250, 74 RD250A and 75 RD250B. The final UK B model is bright and busy but cracking eye candy. The UK Butterfly Blue model in camera offers a timeless appeal while the UK A model in Brigade Blue often looks a tad restrained. Grab one from the USA and there are a huge number of choices in terms of colours, tank sizes, graphics and even brakes. Yes there's even a 1974 A model option in Amber Brown fitted with a drum brake; Yamaha presumably had some left over in the warehouse! Prices have remained low for many years mainly because many coffin tanked 250s have become hugely valued as parts donor to

400s. The earliest examples had different clocks, minimalist switch gear, thinner seats and no embossing on the outer engine cases. That said Yamaha used a fairly random approach to stock management so hybrids are not unknown. It's still possible to find a complete one for as little as £500. Examples missing key items are best avoided; spares are not as plentiful compared to later models. £1200-1500 will realise a perfectly usable example that'll pass an MoT with little hassle and £2500 should get you a very tidy specimen. At £3500 from a dealer you should be buying an extremely clean and sorted machine. Anything north of this would have to be early and extremely good bordering on show quality.

was always that little bit more resilient than Suzuki's three bearing crank on the Hustler/GT. In fact later GT250s would be upgraded to the same type of bottom end to enhance reliability.

Styling is a very subjective matter but few would argue that the 72/73 RD250 is anything other than a thing of beauty. Dropping the chrome side panel detailing of the YDS7 in favour of simple panels lifted the bike's profile; ditto with the adoption of the smooth and organically shaped outer engine cases. The petrol tank bulked up a little and was fitted with a locking cap yet the straight horizontal lower edge added a touch of class. The RD's dash board is a thing of simple elegance combined with functionality. Everything you need is there, two idiot lights for the indicators and a bulb checker which was radical stuff back in the day. The new black switch gear on both bars was easy to use and proved to be something Yamaha would continue to employ in the coming years on a wide range of models.

Much was made of the bike's association with the TZ racers; RD was alleged to stand for Race Developed and it did the sales figures no harm whatsoever. Yamaha was riding on the crest of a wave at the time



and pretty much anyone who wanted track success bought a privateer TZ. It certainly wasn't purely happenstance that the crankcases ran the same mounting points. The RD250's frame was in general a road going version of the TZ's with concessions to Construction & Use Regulations and probably made of a lower grade steel but it still handled better than anything the opposition had. With some decent tyres, and a set of period Girling shocks (or Konis if you were rich) Yamaha's RD250 was pretty much untouchable as a 250 and capable of surprising bigger machinery. The only bike to offer it a challenge around the twisties would be the super rare and expensive Benelli 2C but fragility and a lack of top end would generally see the RD come out on top. If the bike went and handled well then it stopped even better. The cast iron twin piston hydraulic caliper was a heavyweight version of the unit fitted to the GP machines and, for the period, offered strong and predictable retardation. Add in a rod operated rear anchor with bags of feel and the bike offered a stunningly capable, all round competent, learner legal, package.

More than 40 years on, the round tanked RD250 continues to live in the shadow of the later coffin tanked 250s and 400s which marginalises their true value. If you were a fan of Saarinen, Read, Ago and the like then you'll recall just how important the early RDs were. But if it's the likes of Roberts that inspired you these early reed valved machine possibly look a little dated which is a shame. The round tanked RDs had a short lifespan yet they heralded the start of a new era for two-strokes. If you get the chance ride an early RD250; you are very likely to walk away struggling to grasp just how good it is. **cm**

It's my bike: Jayne Le Noan

The latest addition to my bike collection is a Yamaha RD250 in Butterfly Blue with 1923 miles on the clock. The story goes that the owner purchased the bike in 1973, fell off it in 1974 and put it in his back room where it remained until he passed away and his brother found it (his family didn't even know he owned a motorbike!). The bike is all original and was complete at time of purchase but very tired from being stored in a damp environment for 40 years. I stripped it down and parts were sent off for chroming and powder coating, the engine was stripped down and the only thing that needed attention was the crank which was a bit notchy from being stood so long. The paintwork needed refreshing so it was stripped back to bare metal, etched, primed and repainted by myself in its original colour of Butterfly Blue with White and Black striping (no decals). Things were progressing fine until a phone call from the chromers to say the exhausts had rotted from the inside and the front mudguard had developed holes so I had to source replacements which was a challenge I wasn't expecting. Finally all the parts came back, it was reassembled and was deemed ready for Stafford Show. At the moment, due to the fact that there was no paperwork with the bike and DVLA having no records due to a fire, I am in the process of gathering information from Central Records in Manchester to try and keep the original registration number and am hoping to have the bike on the road soon.



SPECIFICATION

YAMAHA RD250

ENGINE TYPE

Air-cooled two-stroke twin,
247cc

BORE AND STROKE

54 x 54 mm

CLAIMED HORSEPOWER

30bhp @ 7500rpm

MAXIMUM TORQUE

20.2lb-ft @ 7000rpm

TRANSMISSION TYPE

5-speed UK, 6-speed USA
chain final drive

COMPRESSION RATIO

6.7:1

CARBURETION

2 x VM28 Mikuni

TYRES

3.00-18 (F), 3.25-18 (R)

DRY WEIGHT

154kg (340lb)

WHEELBASE

1320mm (52in)

WIDTH

835mm (32.9in)

OVERALL LENGTH

2040mm (80.3in)



PARTS & SERVICES

- Your local Suzuki dealer
- Wemoto
- Yambits

RESOURCES

- www.aircooledrdclub.com
- [yamahaclubclub-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:yamahaclubclub-subscribe@yahoo.com)
- www.rdseries.it

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Integral, three heat level controller for ultimate control.
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BIMOTA DB2SR 1995, Martini racing colours, 904cc, 5695 miles, MoT August 2016, original SS cylinder studs replaced with HTS, vgc, £9850 ono Tel. 07763 012780; 01425 478045. Hampshire



BMW K100RS blue/white Special Edition, 50k on clock, none ABS, tested to May 2016, good condition for age, some paint peeling to side panels, £1200 ono Tel. 07708 662521. East Yorks



BMW R1000 1979, Cafe Racer, totally immaculate condition, loads of history, low mileage, Siebenrock 1000cc conversion, Mikuni carbs, £5250 Tel. Paul 01914 561652.



BMW R100R Classic, 1996, 40,000 miles, BMW panniers, screen, MoT Aug 2016, £2950 Tel. 07724 322198 9am-1pm. Leics



BMW R100RT 28,000 miles, full luggage, full MoT, excellent condition, £3600 Tel. 01923 461289. Herts



BMW R1150GS 2003, 47,800 miles, MoT March 2016, service history, two keys, vgc for year, Boxster stainless exhaust & chip, £2750 ono, p/x SR500 Tel. 07472 583835. Lothian



BRIDGESTONE MK2SS 200cc, 1969, near concours restoration to orig spec, UK reg, with MoT 8/2016, superb example of Bridgestone's high performance rotary valve 2T, £4250 ono Tel. 01474 746930. Kent



BSA D14 1968, 8500 miles only, this is a very nice bike, recent MoT, V5 etc, photos if required £1850 Tel. 07925 896698. Cheshire



BSA ROYAL STAR resprayed, frame, wheels rebuilt, new tyres, new pistons smalls ends starts & runs well, £3450 ono Tel. 01621 786100. Essex



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HONDA CB-1 400cc, 1989, MoT June 2016, excellent condition, history, reducing collection, £1150 ovno Tel. 01584 890605. Shrops



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HONDA CB250 Superdream, 1980, MoT, very low mileage, £1700 ovno Tel. 07711 268878. Cheshire



HONDA CB250N 1978, new S/S exhaust pipe, Rex's cdi new tyres & chain sprockets etc, £1050 Tel. Bob 07712 971468. Leics



HONDA CB360 USA import, not reg yet, no MoT, all relevant docs to make you the first owner in UK, lots spent, starts and runs, only 5900 miles, too many new parts to list, £2000 Tel. 07783 599166. Gtr Man



HONDA CB400/4 1976, good condition, owned since 1988, new front mudguard, coils, right handlebar switch, seat, replacement exhaust, MoT Feb 2016, runs well, £2500 ono Tel. 07801 067396. West Sussex



HONDA CB450K5 1973, under 10,000 miles, very good condition, to heavy for me now, offers over, £4400 Tel. 01935 840818. Somerset



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HONDA CB900F good overall condition, 1982, 53,000 miles, MoT May 2016, Marzocchi, Marshall exhaust, recent service, starts, runs rides fine, Tel. 07739 710275. Cambs



HONDA CBR600F 2000, 49,800 miles, MoT 2016, new tyres, reliable, fsh, £1250 Tel. 07925 128612; 01865 513531. Oxon



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HONDA H100S11 1989, 17,000 miles, MoT, part history, original condition, good runner, £1000 Tel. 07974 960906. Lincs



HONDA HORNET 600cc, vgc, new battery, 14,000 miles, Sorn, will MoT, garaged last two years, reg 2001, £1900 ono Tel. 01900 814767. Cumbria



HONDA HORNET 600cc, 2011 years, 2280 miles, MoT, lovely condition, £3900 Tel. 01781 2562009. Southampton



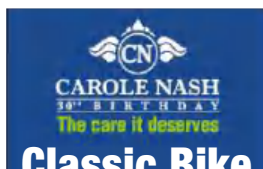
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HONDA HORNET CB250 1997, lots of new parts fitted just been serviced, runs well, 12 months MoT, rare bike, £1700 Tel. 07904 296932. North London



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HONDA REBEL 250 2001, excellent condition, 9000 miles, 12 months MoT, ideal commuter bike, £1200 ono Tel. 01767 448575. Bedfordshire



HONDA REPSOL reg 2013, 110m, ABS, 250cc, very good condition, still under manufacturer's warranty £3100 ono Tel. 01900 814767. Cumbria



HONDA ST1100 year 2000, genuine 22,568 miles, MoT April 2016, vgc, £2800 Tel. 01227 365443. Kent



HONDA VFR 750 1989, red, 59,278 miles, MoT 27 Feb 2016, good starter, £800 ono Tel. 01536 373015. Northants



HONDA VT500E 1988, MoT July 16, good condition, part restored, good runner, £595 ono Tel. 07746 407321. Kent



HONDA XBR500 1985, 48k miles, superb, frame, engine and bodywork resprayed, new centre stand, fork seals, long MoT, C&S, battery, serviced, runs beautifully, £995 Tel. 07982 466727. London



HONDA XL185 classic trail, new tyres, shocks, runs fine, full V5, known history bargain, £1450 Tel. 07434 040520. Manchester



HONDA XL50 1971, very rare model in UK, could be only one here, fully renovated new rims and tyres five speed Gera box, £1850 Tel. 01516 090404. Merseyside



JAVELIN S/SEAT s/car, fair condition, some fittings, 10" wheel, screen scratched, £350 ono Tel. Alan 07946 485404. Newark



KAWASAKI 1100 SPECTRE vgc, 99% original, good engine, 50k miles, needs registering, all paperwork supplied, £1150 Tel. 0161 7666353. Lancs



KAWASAKI 550 LTD C3 1982, US version, vgc, MoT, new chain, sprockets, swinging arm bearings, good tyres, Motad stainless exhaust, reliable, runs well, £995 ono Tel. 07939 066802. Somerset



KAWASAKI GPX600R 1995, red, 53k miles, drives perfectly, a few minor scratches, up to date photos, s/h available, selling as finishing short motorcycle career, £1250 ono Tel. 07527 578719. B'ham

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KAWASAKI GPZ900 A2 1985, 32,500 miles, good original condition, starts & runs perfectly, new MoT, new battery, new rear tyre, reluctant sale, £3500 Tel. Tim on 01432 850453 (day) 01432 355951 (eves).



KAWASAKI GT750 P4 1985, sound runner, many parts recently replaced, currently Sorn, collect from Coalville, £1100 ono Tel. Shane 07905 188744 after 6pm weekdays, any time weekends. Leics



KAWASAKI GTR 1000 1994, factory fitted panniers, recent rear disc, monoshock bushes, Goodridge hoses, new battery just fitted, owned since 2000, 32,541 miles, gc, £1350 Tel. 07434 129349. Derbys



KAWASAKI KR1 1988, imported, 1995, with KR1S paintwork, unmolested original condition, new MoT, ready to ride or restore, £2250 Tel. 07765 230730. Hants



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KAWASAKI VERSYS 2010, only 3016 on the clock, lovely clean bike, been in garage when not ridden, years MoT, new brake discs, new pads, new tyres. Tel. 07967 002762. Kent



KAWASAKI VN750 1994, reg No M734 XER, owned 19 years, 2444 miles, not run for 18 years, good general condition but carbs, requires attention, £2125 ovno Tel. Alan 01733 576554; 07932 655345. Cambs



KAWASAKI W650 2002, fantastic condition, doubt you would find better, needs nothing just tax it and go, £3250 Tel. 07817 257889. Leics



KAWASAKI W650 2001, vgc, 16,273 miles, Hepco & Becker bespoke detachable luggage, years MoT, many extras, new Avon Road Rider tyres, new battery etc, £3600 ono Tel. 01507 609207. Lincs



KAWASAKI Z1000R2 1982, excellent condition, reluctant sale, £4200 Tel. 07801 061976. Hampshire



KAWASAKI Z1A 1974, lovely condition, engine rebuilt, new paintwork, spokes, rims, tyres and new standard exhausts, superb classic must be seen, £12,500 ono Tel. 07786 162917. West Midlands



KAWASAKI Z250 B1 1981, Rickman Tempest fairing, QD panniers, superb unrestored condition, some spares, 5465 miles, £1800 ono, cash on collection Tel. 01964 537046. East Yorkshire



KAWASAKI Z750E 1981, 22k, v orig, Yoshi 4-1, nos seat and tacho, MoT, recent brakes, carb diaphragms (need balancing), regular use until recently, easy project or ride as is. Tel. 07764 377519. Surrey



KAWASAKI ZEPHYR 550 1991, MoT Aug 2016, V5, recent respray, brand new piggy back shocks, recent brake pads, fork seals & service, 40,000 miles, £900 ono Tel. 07980 350031. Borders



KAWASAKI ZR750 2001, only 5500 miles, lovely condition, 10 months MoT, good tyres & chain etc, Classic Insurance from next July, £1495 ono Tel. 07817 257889. Leics



KAWASAKI ZZR1100 1991, fitted with a low mileage 2003 ZZR1200, 160bhp engine, lots of new parts, just been serviced, MoT, requires minor tidying, £2000 Tel. 07904 296932. North London



MONTESA IMPALA 175cc, 1964, lightweight sports bike, genuine Spanish model, sympathetically restored, £2300 Tel. Mike 01386 48007. Worcs



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MOTO GUZZI V35 Mk1, 1977, red in lovely condition, 15,000 miles, £1750 ono; also V65 for sale. Tel. 01612 803017. Lancs



MOTO GUZZI ZIGOLES two, both with V5C registration documents, 110cc tax & MoT expired in July and incomplete 98cc, £2050 ono Tel. 07840 251105. Lancs



NSU SUPERMAX SPECIAL 1958, 250cc, nice clean bike, starts & rides well, all frame & cycle parts recently powder/coated, wheels rebuilt with stainless spokes, £4250 may p/x Tel. 01328 700711. Norfolk



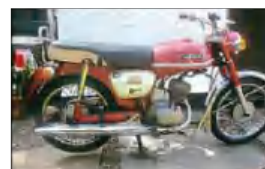
ROYAL ENFIELD Bullet, MoT Sept 16, new cables & spare set leather Enfield panniers and tool roll, used regularly, very low miles, garaged, £1300 ono Tel. 07788 587264. Warwickshire



SUNBEAM S7 1951, 500cc, sorted, appreciating & rare classic, ready to go, one of the best around, £8200 Tel. Will 07872 998963. Oxfordshire



SUZUKI 25 WOLF 1993, full restoration, frame powder coated, racing fern, newly painted bodywork, digital speedo, braided hoses, new pads, 12 months' MoT, £1200 Tel. 077520 56580. Co Derry



SUZUKI B120 1995, 8145 miles, dry stored last 13 years, some runs, runs ok, V5C, workshop manual, new battery/charger, £550 Tel. 01566 782409. Cornwall



SUZUKI BANDIT 600 Custom bike, good condition, day time MoT, £1400 ono Tel. 07429 447452. Kent



SUZUKI BURGMAN 400 2010, vgc, alloy wheels, new Michelin tyres, 10,000 miles, MoT Sept 2016, heated grips, service history, 70mpg, £2550 Tel. 01912 375555. Tyne & Wear



SUZUKI DRZ440 S retro street scrambler, 2001, 16,750 miles, many mods & new parts including rear tyre, lowered seat, Ram Air filter & brake pads. Tel. 01617 991829. Grt Manchester



SUZUKI GS1000E classic bike, full MoT only 18,000 miles, good condition, worth a look, £2250 Tel. Pete 07702 434407. West Mids



SUZUKI GS1000S original, 1980, blue/white Coolley Replica in great condition, £7500 Tel. 01364 631119. Devon

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SUZUKI GS250 twin, 1980, low mileage, new battery, good tyres, bright chrome & alloy deep black paintwork a clean classic, £850 Tel. Ernie 01286 881644. Gwynedd



SUZUKI GS850G 1981, shaft drive, new tyres & exhaust, 25,000 miles, goes & looks well, £1200 ono Tel. 01472 841226. Lincs



SUZUKI GSF1200 Bandit, W reg, 2000 model, as new immaculate original standard condition, only done 2300 miles, Sorn, £3250 ono Tel. 07765 507232. West Yorkshire



SUZUKI GSX 250 1980, p/coated frame, new tyres, carbs, cleaned, new jets, full service, full MoT, very rare, £600 ono Tel. 07737 612159. Northants



SUZUKI GSX1100 Naked Katana, excellent condition, £2500 Tel. 07903 777252. Cumbria



SUZUKI GSX1100 ESD, 1983, 38,000 miles, 95% original, top end and cosmetic rebuilt, MoT needed, £1900 Tel. 07570 819010. Wiltshire



SUZUKI GSX1100F powerscreen, 1994, 39,000 miles, had major resto 2011, over £7000 spent, loads of new parts full engine rebuild, MoT Aug 2016, £2000 ono Tel. 07522 631931. Notts



SUZUKI GSX550E classic, 1986, original showroom/collectors condition, 20,000 miles, good service history, new MoT, new tyres, plugs etc, £1850 ovno Tel. 01573 420520. Scottish Borders



SUZUKI GSX750 ESD, 1983, recent tyres, recent O ring chain & sprockets, 4 into 1 exhaust, same owner for last 17 years, 53,000 miles, original bike, £900 ono Tel. 01249 657555. Wiltshire



SUZUKI GSXF750 tested, good condition, 1989 model, 23,000 miles, everything working, £650 Tel. 01207 504362. Co Durham



SUZUKI GSXR750SP stunning, 1994, never raced, 3000kms from new, fantastic condition, £9995 Tel. 01364 631119.



SUZUKI GT250 X7, first registered 1984, full restoration with all new genuine parts, owned five years, needs nothing, £3250 Tel. 07581 008210. South Yorkshire



SUZUKI GT250 X7 1982, all speeds, K/N braided line, filters, fork brace, s/damper 29,700 miles, good runner, £1500 Tel. +35386 8736636. Eire, Ireland



SUZUKI GT750/GT550 both MoT, vgc, many new parts not show bikes, classic two strokes, plus spares, £8000 pair Tel. 07833 582342. Kent



SUZUKI GT750J 1972, pink, owned 10 years, in very nice condition but too big for me, Tel. 01278 732853. Devon



SUZUKI GT750L 1974, MoT July 2016, 52,800 miles, good condition, go not show, many new parts, starts first time on button, £4950 ono Tel. 07833 582342. Kent



SUZUKI GW250 2014, 1424 miles, £2500 Tel. 07479 453553. West Sussex


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SUZUKI LS650 Savage, 1990, 7683 miles, as new tyres, new battery, on Sorn, will MoT, £980 ono Tel. 01733 761496. Cambs



SUZUKI RL250 1974/75 Beamish, silver, engine trials bike, good runner, good fun bike, new piston 2 years ago, slight weep on fuel tank due to ethanol problems, £1000 ono Tel. 07708 562885. W Sussex



SUZUKI SP400 1982, good old thumper, new adjustable Hagon shocks, recent tyres, £1300 Tel. 07429 447452. Kent



SUZUKI SP400 1980, fully restored, owned for over four years, MoT until June 2016, ready to show or ride for just, £2595 Tel. 07801 452114. Bucks



SUZUKI SP400 1982, good old thumper, new adjustable Hagon Shocks, recent tyres, £1300 Tel. 07429 447452. Kent



SUZUKI SV1000K3 20,000 dry miles, nice condition, tank cover, new tyres, recent battery, Sorn Nov 1st 2015, MoT May 2016, quick sale £2000 Tel. 07766 133748. Cleveland



SUZUKI T20 basket case, 1968, with half extra bike as spares, not running, needs work, material for a wonderful & fun fast classic motorcycle, in Denmark, £1000 Tel. 45281 09517. racmeister@gmail.com



SUZUKI T500 J, 1972, imported from USA, V5C, MoT July 2016, matching numbers not restored, £2500 Tel. 01274 875853. West Yorkshire



SUZUKI TL1000S 1997, 31k miles, Yoshi exhaust, PC Commander, genuine 125 bhp, MoT, lots of extras, owned for last five years, good clean example, first to see will buy, £2200 ovno Tel. 0785 9011863.



SUZUKI TS125J 1973, fully restored, engine rebuilt, too much Nos to list, looks stunning, a rare bike even rarer in this condition, £2995 Tel. 07810 603633. Devon



SUZUKI TS50 Hustler ER, 1985, Japanese import, UK reg, good condition, used regularly till Sorn, unrestricted engine, some minor rust areas, rare model in UK, £750 Tel. 07859 013452. Mid Wales



TRIUMPH BONNEVILLE T100 2009, only 3400 dry miles, as new condition, just serviced & MoT, chrome rack, £4850 Tel. 01384 359720. West Midlands



TRIUMPH DAYTONA 1995, immaculate, totally original condition, loads of history, very low mileage, mint example in everyway, £3200 Tel. Paul 01914 561652. Tyne & Wear



TRIUMPH DAYTONA 955i 2006, fantastic condition, £10,000 miles, very good tyres, recently serviced, possibly an appreciating classic, lovely condition, £3150 Tel. 07717 712896. West Sussex



TRIUMPH T140V American Model, original excellent show condition bike, as featured in Real Classics Magazine, unrestored bike, sensible offers considered towards £6995 Tel. 07752 969630. West Mids



TRIUMPH THUNDERBIRD Sport, 2001, 23,350 miles, MoT Apr 16, s/h, fitted Vonzetti single seat, Lucas style rear light, bar end mirrors, front fairing, tyres, chrome, £4600 Tel. 01323 892694. E Sussex



TRIUMPH TR7V Tiger 750, 1976, beautifully restored inc upgrades (unleaded head, Mikuni carb stainless steel rims & spokes electronic ign), £5395 ono Tel. 07817 257889. Leics



VELOREX SIDECAR new body, new mudguard with lights, braked wheel, handbrake, new handbrake cable, seat, excellent frame, fittings, £525 Tel. 01617 666353. Lancs



YAMAHA 600S 1997, green/blue, low mileage, good condition for year, new tyres, chain and sprockets, £900 Tel. 07707 445210. Leics



YAMAHA DIVERSION XJ900S super condition, fsh, full luggage, heated grips, fsh, immobiliser, 31,002 miles, MoT July 2016, Tel. 01493 751613. Norfolk



YAMAHA DS7 1972, vgc, 5k since full rest, Electrex ign system fitted, goes as it should, show or ride, buy and ride away, £4250 or make me an offer, buyer collects. Tel. 01823 430198. Somerset



YAMAHA DT175MX 1981, mostly original spec, older restoration for riding rather than showing, starts & runs well, 16,700 miles, MoT to July 2016, £1950 Tel. 07816 126365. Cornwall



YAMAHA FJ1200 ABS, 1992, K reg, lots of service history, engine bars & Scottolier fitted, topbox not included in sale, currently on Sorn, MoT, £1700 ono Tel. 01269 594508. Dyfed



YAMAHA FZR1000 1988, 250 miles since rebuild, fair condition, nine half months MoT, contact for details Tel. 07443 526384. Dorset



YAMAHA FZS600SP one owner, 11,000 miles only, new tyres, MoT, top box, regularly serviced, new battery, £2000 Tel. 07821 621124. Essex



YAMAHA GPZ900R A2, 1985, 44,000 miles, MoT till mid June 2016, good condition, runs & rides well, good chrome exhausts, £1000 ono Tel. Mike 07880 878835. Northants



YAMAHA R1 1998, only 15k miles, full s/h, the best available fast appreciating classic, £3350 Tel. 07801 315558. West Mids



YAMAHA RD350 YPVS, 1984, 23,000 miles, matching numbers, lots of work done, £3500 Tel. 00353 868797963. Cork, Ireland



YAMAHA RD350 YPVS, 1989, matching numbers and one key fits all the locks, owned for the last seven years, HEL lines, £2200 Tel. 07977 984089. Gwynedd



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YAMAHA RD350LC YPVS, 1983, MoT Nov matching numbers, Pro AM colours, vgc but not mint, £2650 Tel. 07986 857259. Derbyshire



YAMAHA RD400 to restore, engine running, standard trim, correct exhausts etc, matching numbers, red/white colours, £2250 Tel. 01874 712265 after 6pm. Powys



YAMAHA Rxs100 in nice condition, new chain, sprockets and battery, MoT till March 2016, £700 ono Tel. 07929 829256. Lancs



YAMAHA RZ250RR YPVS, 1985, imported 1991, 99% restored in amazing condition, new MoT, £2950 ono Tel. Craig 07765 230730. Hants



YAMAHA SR125 1992, very low mileage & very good condition, eligible for classic insurance, £1550 Tel. Dennis 01227 740909. Kent



YAMAHA TY320 Majesty trials bike, nickel frame, all new wheels, tyres, parts, Yamaha alloy tank, elec ign, runs/rides well, very good condition, £5250 ono Tel. Wayne 077811 19148. Guernsey



YAMAHA TZR250 3MA, 1989, owned since 1998, stored in a heated garage for 10 years, prior to recent refurbishment & MoT, £4000 Tel. 01732 823318. Kent



YAMAHA VIRAGO XV250S 1996, 11,500 miles, vgc, garage stored avoided rain, newish tyres, exhaust lots of extras, no rust, no bumps, all working beautifully, MoT, £1600 Tel. 0113 3188531. West Yorks



YAMAHA XJR1300, 2000 model, not SP, 28,000 dry miles, vgc original, garaged, worked, service history, extras, £2950 ovno Tel. Richie 07950 914959. Merseyside



YAMAHA XS650 1980, custom build, very tidy, MoT, would p/x Tel. James 07544 267110; 01250 872333. Tayside



YAMAHA YCS1/CS1 1967, 2500 miles, original unrestored, runs/rides great, UK reg/tax free, £1850 Tel. 07927 553187. Worcs



YAMAHA YFZR1 1999, T, full MoT, new battery, tyre, custom seats, £3000 Tel. 07775 902706. North Yorkshire

FOR SALE

BULTACO 250 Persang, very good condition, new tank, respoked wheels new chain sprocket, new tyres, matching frame engine numbers, new cables, runs lovely, 1976, £2100 Tel. 07932 527300. Essex.

D7 BANTAM SUPER DELUXE 1966, perfect restoration project for which I have no time, £300 spent on engine rebuild with new cylinder - just the frame to do now, bike complete except battery and tool kit, more pics available, £650 ovno Tel. 01260 227247; 07860 554663. Cheshire.

GARAGE CLEARANCE Honda CB900F, 1979, Honda C50 1975, Honda 400-4 FZN 1997, Suzuki 600 Bandit 1997, Suzuki GS500 E 1997, all with V5s, best offer secures. Tel. 07835 709412. Devon.

GARAGE CLEAROUT Honda CBR1000R, D reg; Yamaha Thudrace N reg; Kawasaki ZXR900 all have MoT and can be ridden away swop the lot for GSXR1000 K5 and cash. Tel. 07786 151797. Gwent.

HARLEY 883 N/14 converted to 1200 by Sycamore HD Screaming Eagle RSD, 2-in-1 carbon ops, selling due to bad back, £9200 Tel. 01733 341966. Cambs.

HONDA CB125 TDC Superdream, 1983, silver, MoT March 2016, new battery, Comstar, all wheels, e/start, flyscreen, reluctant sale of very tidy collectable classic due to family health issues, £950 ono Tel. 01872 240206 after 5pm; 07812 457484 (no texts). Cornwall.

HONDA CB160 engine parts required. Tel. Dave 07761 247732. Merseyside.

HONDA CB250 51 plate, long MoT, red, long MoT, vgc, £6950 ono Tel. 07922 600251 between 6.30pm & 8.30pm. Hampshire.

HONDA CB250RS 1985, MoT till Nov 2015, clean bike good runner, 38,000 miles, black/blue, new tyres new downpipes, classic bike, £400 Tel. 07971 428275. Surrey.

HONDA CB450 1971 K3 spares: tank, seat, clocks, side panels, good original exhaust system, clean carbs, air filter unit, both mudguards, starter motor, electrics, frame, etc, US spec bike so parts are in good original condition for their age. Tel. Barry 07792 517466. North Yorkshire.

HONDA CB750 F2N 32,000 miles, years MoT, Givi luggage, new Hagons, clutch, battery, chain, oil, photos available. £1150 Tel. 07788 981908. Bristol.

HONDA CBR600 1991 on Sorn, £500 Tel. 01529 413579. Lincs.

HONDA CB450DX 1987, good condition, start and runs fine, seat, exhausts, tyres all good, reliable, 12 months MoT, regrettable sale not being used, £800 Tel. 02920 883315. Caerphilly.

HONDA CB600 immaculate Hornet with less than 8000 dry miles, Beowulf exhaust and original with sale, £2400 Tel. 01433 620855. North Derbyshire.

HONDA CUB 90 1993, well loved, excellent runner/condition, red, 27,700 miles, electric start, will MoT if required, £750 ono Tel. 07714 954382; 07857 311569. Lancs.

HONDA DEAUVILLE NT650V, 1999, MoT July 2016, heated grips, QD top box, no dents, red, 37,000 miles, ride it home, £850 Tel. 01767 691209. Beds.

HONDA NTV 650cc, 1997, V/twin, black small screen, good bodywork & tyres, shaft drive, £400 ono Tel. Paul 02083 046610. Greater London.

HONDA PAN EUROPEAN 1998, ST1100 ex police, 84,500 miles, good condition, burgundy, serviced, new fork seals, stainless exhaust, new tyres, wax oiled, swinging arm, MoT until August 2016, big fast comfortable bike, £1400 Tel. 01516 788883. Wirral.

HONDA PCXS 125 Super stylish with idle stop, £500 extras, Oct 14, just 1500 miles, spotless, mint condition, mature rider, sorry to let go but ill health sale, £2395 ovno Tel. 077890 61218 (no text messages please) for details. Yorks.

HONDA VFR800 VTEC 2011, (A9) bagster tank cover, b/w, £60; zero gravity dark tint screen, £40; Dynojet Power Commander, ref. 16-005, £150 Tel. 01606 854762. Gtr Man.

HONDA VTR Firestorm, red, 1998, 25,000 miles, good condition, MoT March 2016, Tel. Andy 01277 658670; mobile 07941 612139. Essex.

HONDA XBR500 1985, black, 47,900 miles, superb condition, frame, engine & bodywork stripped & sprayed, new centre stand, fork seals, chain & sprockets, battery, fully serviced, MoT March 2016, workshop manual, runs perfectly, £1150 Tel. 07982 466727. East London.

KAWASAKI E500 very good engine and runner, black project bike, to restore only needs front tyres, fork seals and a good clean easy winter project, MoT, £500 ono Tel. 02920 883315. Caerphilly.

KAWASAKI GPZ750R 1985, on Sorn, £895 ono Tel. 07779 677137. Cornwall.

KAWASAKI GPZ900R A7, 1990, first super bike, red, 36,800 miles, great runner, immaculate condition, original bars & footrests with it, £2200 ono Tel. 07714 954382. Lancs.

KAWASAKI GTR1000 1994, 32,500 miles, burgundy, Goodridge hoses to front, Michelin tyres as new to front & rear, recent rear disc, new monoshock bushes, new battery just fitted, reqs new screen cracked, plus MoT will pass ok, £1375 Tel. 07434 129349. Derbyshire.

KAWASAKI KH250 B2, 1977, 100% there plus spares work needed some done, matching numbers, highest offer secures. Tel. 01695 570652. Lancs.

KAWASAKI KH350 Zephyr, originally 1979, KH250, now fitted with front and rear end of a 550 Zephyr top end of a 350 rebored carbs, cleaned brakes, rebuilt Allspeed chambers, looks and sounds great, MoT September 2016, call for details, £3450 ono Tel. 07847 225624. Surrey.

KAWASAKI KM100 1980, V reg, 87 miles from new, rusty, breaking for spares, may sell complete. Tel. 01246 827179; 07400 576641. Derbys.

KAWASAKI S2A 350 1972, rare two stroke triple, fully restored including full engine rebuild, matching engine & frame numbers, correctly set up & runs beautifully, £6250 ovno Tel. 01280 823322. Bucks.

KAWASAKI Z1 900 1976, candy blue, lovely condition, long MoT, standard original bike, very well kept 40k miles, lovely 70s classic can only go up in value, good investment, pictures upon request, £7995 Tel. 07762 437521. Essex.

KAWASAKI Z200 1980, 11,000 miles, nice tidy bike, sell/swop for British bike, any condition, bike kept garaged at Daventry, £500 Tel. 07934 114301. South Wales.

KAWASAKI Z650 1979, MoT till Dec, runs well, good condition, good tyres, chain sprockets, exhaust, £1650 Tel. 01244 332435; 07564 960647. Cheshire.

KAWASAKI Z650 1979, MoT December, good condition, tyres, exhaust etc, £1650 Tel. 01244 332435; 07564 960647. Cheshire.

KAWASAKI ZZR1100 D7 long MoT, side panniers, top box, new back tyre, some stone chips on front end, overall good condition, £1350 ovno Tel. 07811 980330.

KAWAZAKI ZX12R used, MoT, regularly serviced, few marks, 47,000 miles, £1800 ono Tel. 07747 403666.

MOTO GUZZI V50 being built as cafe racer, re-enamelled, red, needs little work to complete, (mainly electrics), new Avon tyres, £1250 Tel. 01978 842668. Clwyd.

REDUCING COLLECTION: Suzuki GSX 250cc, 1984, blue, nearly restored, £795. Yamaha RS 200cc, two stroke, engine & clutch rebuilt, blue, £695, all the dirty work done. Tel. Gordon 01454 324334; 07792 272041. Bristol.

REDUCING COLLECTION: Yamaha RXS 100cc, 1983, blue, restored, £695; Suzuki GSX 250cc, 1984, blue, nearly restored, £795; Yamaha RS 200cc, 1979, blue, nearly restored, £695; Yamaha Dragster cruiser, 650cc, 2003, silver, one owner, mint condition, many chrome extras, £2500; fantastic bargains. Tel. Gordon 01454 324334; 07792 272041. Bristol.

SQUIRE ST2 single seat side car, red, Universal fittings, removable hood, lockable boot and key, sensible offers Tel. 01278 425315. Somerset.

SUZUKI GT 250cc, 1975, MoT, excellent condition, £3000 ono. Yamaha Majesty, 250cc, MoT, very clean condition, £850 ono or p/x for Yamaha RX 100cc Tel. 01270 256208. Cheshire.

SUZUKI GP100 red, 1992, new tyres, new battery, tidy for age, £550 ono Tel. 01278 684979 after 6pm. Somerset.

SUZUKI GS500 1994, 26k miles, non runner, currently on Sorn, bought last year as a retirement project but now unable to start due to ill health. Tel. 07910 127257. Devon.

SUZUKI GSF1200 2005, 10,000 miles, year's MoT, metallic grey paintwork, fly screen, very good condition, £2850 ono Tel. 079644 82455. Berks.

SUZUKI GSX750 T reg, 1999, MoT 30th Sept, Sorned, crash bars, classic insurance, excellent runner, £1100 ono Tel. 01286 882776. North Wales.

SUZUKI GT250 excellent condition, MoT, must be viewed, £3450 ono; Yamaha Majesty, 250cc scooter, MoT, excellent condition, £1250 ono Tel. 01270 256208. Cheshire.

SUZUKI HAYABUSA 1340CC, LO/2010 one owner, black/red, 22,000 miles, £5500 Tel. 07801 298132. Dumfries, Scotland.

SUZUKI HAYABUSA 1300R black & red, 1999, model restricted, two owners, 14,000 miles, MoT, vgc, £3000 ono Tel. 07976 752528. West Midlands.

SUZUKI INTRUDER 1800cc, 2012 reg, crash bars, screen, new tyres, sissy bar, rack and panniers, 9,600 miles approx, MoT, immaculate, £7650 ono Tel. 0789 4078815. Notts.

SUZUKI SV650 SPORT blue, silver, full fairing, MoT, good condition, £1400 ono Tel. 07976 752528. West Midlands.

SUZUKI SV650S Sport, 2009, blue/white, vgc, lots of extras, paddock stand, cover etc, 9,400 miles, £2500 ono Tel. 01446 404669; 07825 163407. Glam.

SUZUKI SV650SK1 650cc, MoT April, 12,000 miles, vgc, blue, new battery, tyres, chain sprockets, all standard, year 2001, £2000 ono Tel. 07773 455964. Notts.

YAMAHA 900 Diversion, excellent, running, unused 2014/15, swap for small 125cc/200cc running Honda twin, no need for MoT or docs, Diversion too heavy, £595 ono Tel. 01525 378332. Beds.

YAMAHA IT175 1983, MoT January 2016, average condition for year, £1200 Tel. 07999 884472. West Sussex.

YAMAHA RD250LC restored by Classic and Modern Bikes, mint condition, no tax, MoT on sale, has featured in Classic Motorcycle Mechanics 2010 September, £3995 Tel. 01905 779197.

YAMAHA SR125 good condition, 1993, mileage 33,000, garaged, economical lightweight, five gears, runs very well, MoT June 2016, £600 Tel. 01453 756524. Glos.

YAMAHA TR1 XV1000 1983, customised with an old classic Vee Twin in mind, main customised features include, SU Carb, bespoke battery box, centrally mounted clock/display, extendable/retractable back rail, can ship to England (£150?) £3500 ono Tel. Sean 07716 791249. County Down.

YAMAHA XJ600N 2003, 37,377 miles, over £300 worth brand new, genuine Yamaha parts, MoT Feb 2016, complete bike, dark green, spares or repair, £700 no offers, cash only Tel. 07581 751375. Cheshire.

YAMAHA XJ900 Diversion, 1997, green, MoT July 2016, 35,000 miles, runs & rides, superb good overall condition, original exhausts, Kappa luggage, engine bars, Fenda extenda, great commuter tourer, £1650 ono Tel. 07847 225624. Surrey.

YAMAHA XV1100 Virago, fantastic condition, black/burgundy original paintwork, newish MoT, new front tyre new rear brake shoes, original exhaust, £2250 Tel. 07939 816318. West Sussex.

YAMAHA YZF1 1000cc, red & silver, mint condition, 26,000 miles, new tyres + new flu exhaust system, + battery, alarm and immobiliser, datatagged, MoT, two keys, £2300 ono Tel. 07925 340627. Bristol.

YAMASAKI YM125 2012 reg, first new MoT till 2016 August, tidy bike, reason for selling need space in shed, £475 ono Tel. 01872 240206. Cornwall.

PARTS FOR SALE

ALLOY MOTORCYCLE PARTS restored and polished, Heathrow/Surrey area, Tel. Zed 07590 53223. Middx.

AVON AM18 120/80 V18 Super Venom, no miles as new, was on bike I bought but over size for heel, £50 Tel. 01617 553980. Lancs.

BEOWULF EXHAUSTS pair, black, s/steel, £120. Nitron full spec rear shock £300, Gilles chain adjusters £80, all to fit Suzuki GSX R1000 K7/8, all in good condition. Tel. 07859 011863. Birmingham.

BSA A10 GOLDSTAR etc, gearbox for sale, wanted M20 or earlier gearbox poss, exchange cash either way WHY? Tel. Gareth 07811 271702. Mid Glamorgan.

CONTINENTAL ROAD ATTACK front 100/90R 18, rear 130/80R 18, minimal use on rear front unused, came with race bike but not fitted, £85 Tel. 01617 553980. Lancs.

CRASH BARS front & back, came off AJS 650cc twin, good chrome, bargain £35 plus p&p at cost; also top box, £20. Tel. 07443 642408. West Yorks.

HONDA 400 F1 1976, new indicator bracket, tools and box, rear brake, front reservoir and lever, caliper bracket, casings, disc spat, headlight cover, CB750 SOHC, clocks, wiring harness, Tel. 01507 578146. Lincs.

HONDA BLACKBIRD stubby cans, £110 Tel. 07880 977343. Wales.

HONDA BLACKBIRD genuine, rh silencer off 99 FI bike, only been on for one year, no damage, perfect, looks brand new, half new price, £150 ono Tel. 01289 381140. Northumberland.

HONDA CB160 1965, large quantity engine parts, crankcases barrel cylinder head gears starter motor and more, call for details, £60 Tel. 01635 579115. Berkshire.

HONDA CB400-4F 1975, spare parts left over from project build, this bike had the rear pillion foot rests mounted on the swingarm. Tel. Ski 07999 884472. West Sussex.

HONDA CBR 1000RR Pro-link Special Performance, 1000cc, brand new, never used, offers over £600 Tel. Richard 07916 328736. Leeds, West Yorks.

HONDA CBR250R MC19, 1990, RVF250 front end most parts except motor+wiring. Tel. 07811 698505. Hampshire.

HONDA CBR250R MC19 1990, frame c/w S/A with V5 rear wheel/brake, seats, plastics, petrol tank, sensible prices will split. Tel. Chris 07811 698505. Hampshire.

HONDA CBX750 starter motor, good working order plus starter gear, £60 can post no problem Tel. 07984 706372. Greater Manchester.

HONDA CBX750 CB700SC alternator starter chain, second hand but good to go, obsolete part now from Honda, £70, breaking two engines lots of parts Tel. 07984 706372. Greater Manchester.

HONDA DEAUVILLE NT700 genuine Honda screen, very little use with no scratches, £45, buyer to collect or plus p&p. Tel. 01243 867779. West Sussex.

HONDA FIREBLADE 2007, body work, tank cover, red, black, vgc, ask for details, can send pics. Tel. 07951 818730.

HONDA FIREBLADE 900RR front wheel standard, 16" good condition, £35, bottom yoke, £15. Tel. 07510 674950. West Midlands.

HONDA NT700 Deauville, Haynes workshop manual, as new, £15. Hiflow air filter HFA1713, new, £15. NGK spark plugs x2, new, £8. Tel. Clive 01302 846682. South Yorkshire.

HONDA VFR unused brake and clutch lines, £30. Speedometer, £45. Honda 400-4 rear Fender original two sets, rear shocks, £25. Original pipes rechromed, not mint, £60 Tel. 01252 616192. Hampshire.

HONDA VFR1200FA 2010, pair passenger grab handles, £35 Tel. 07900 371020. Northumberland.

HONDA VFR800 FI, front screen, used and a pair of replacement mirrors, new, from a 1999 bike, £40 Tel. 07505 464654. West Midlands.

HONDA XL250 SPARES two engines, twin port, 2 cylinder heads, rocker covers, barrel, 4 carbs, lots more, engines, £180 each; collection only Kan. Tel. 074340 40520. Lancs.

KAWASAKI W800 two sets unused exhaust/silencers, £300 Tel. 01661 853032. Northumberland.

KAWASAKI Z1000SX 2014 radiator protector, Beowulf, black, as new, £25 Tel. 01625 531109. Cheshire

HONDA XL250 twin port, garage clearance, briefly two full engines, two cylinder heads, rocker covers, four carbs, lots more £350 Tel. 07434 040520. Lancs.

KAWASAKI 1400ZZR light tint double bubble screen, brand new, £50 plus p&p. Almost new Kawasaki 1400ZZR, smoked tint spoiler screen, £50 plus p&p. Hyperpro (RSC) type steering damper off 1400ZZR, will fit most bikes with correct fitting kit & have ZZR kit, £125 plus p&p (Damper only). Tel. 01805 623310. Devon.

KAWASAKI DECALS for KH250/KH400 old style logo unused as new, £10 pair free postage Tel. 01803 607265; 01364 653515. Torquay.

KAWASAKI GPZ500S N reg rolling chassis with docs, could split, £150 ono Tel. 01484 384128 after 6pm. West Yorkshire.

MOORE & WRIGHT 0-1 micrometer assy, new, £30; 0-25 micrometer, £18; hardly used carbide face 12" files for alloy meters, slight rust, 6 of, £30. Tel. 0208 6414238. Surrey.

R&G AERO CRASH PROTECTORS complete with all fittings/teardrop shaped bobbins for Suzuki GSF1250 GT, faired version, £75 ono Tel. 07894 078815. Nottingham.

RIEJU 50 engine, frame, forks, good wheels, V5, £180. Aprilia 50 engine, complete, £75. Solo 100cc kart engine, £45. Tel. 07775 558399. Surrey.

SUZUKI BANDIT 600SY Mk2, good seat and flipscreen, £25 Tel. 01200 426585. Lancs.

SUZUKI GN250 seat, new, £50; Benelli ZC fuel tank, £60; Yamaha XJ650 front guard, £30; tailpiece, £10; l/h side panel, £10; Honda CB750 DOHC clocks, £20; Enfield Electra X fuel tank, £35; front guard, £20; rear guard, £20. Tel. 07771 770868. Milton Keynes.

SUZUKI GS650G Katana spares, tank, engine bars, carbs, rear wheel and disc, seat, £125 the lot Tel. 07874 231738. East Sussex.

SUZUKI GSX1400 K1-K4 fuel round stainless midi silencers and link pipes, £90. K&N airfilter, £20. Blue powder bronze screen, £35. Haynes manual, £10. Tel. 01642 280530; 07816 340143. North Yorkshire.

SUZUKI GSX1400 standard cans, £80 pair. Tel. 07880 977343. Wales.

SUZUKI GT750 petrol tank, front wheel and brake discs, rear wheel and cush drive, in need of restoration, ie, spokes and repainting, £100 can split. Tel. Jim 07984 056636. Tyne & Wear.

SUZUKI RGV250 VM22 front end including forks yokes f/wheel c/w discs, calipers, slight pitting on stations, £200 ono Tel. Chris 07811 698505. Hampshire.

SUZUKI SV650 K3, rear steel subframe, good condition, not damaged at all, £40 Tel. 07545 802250. W Midlands.

SUZUKI SV650S headlamps for sale, backing broken but reflectors and glass ok, £10 also tool kit from the same bike complete, £5. Tel. 0161 3711960; 07733 288008. Greater Manchester.

SUZUKI TS400 parts wanted, maybe complete or incomplete bike. Tel. 01305 826670. Dorset.

TRIUMPH 1050 TIGER standard silencer, £20. Screen, £20. Tel. 01642 280530; 07816 340143. North Yorkshire.

TRIUMPH TRIDENT Sprint 900, 1995, breaking, parts available. Tel. 07789 801540. Wiltshire.

TWO BROTHERS carbon endcan plus link-pipe with bracket for heel guard, as new 50 miles use only, to fit Yamaha FZ8 Fazer 2012, £150 only, cost over £300. Tel. 07974 024893. North Yorkshire.

UNFINISHED PROJECT Y reg Z1000, many new parts including 4 into 1 Harris magnum, tyres, chainset, master cylinder, K&Ns just needs some work on electrics to finish. £950 ono Tel. 07877 745547. Derbyshire.

YAMAHA XJR1300 07 on fuel, round stainless midi silencer and link pipe, £60. Hagon progressive fork springs, £35. K&N airfilter, £20. Tel. 01642 280530; 07816 340143. North Yorks.

YAMAHA FJR1300 parts, rear rack, footrest hanger, rear light, shock, rear light and other bits. Tel. Mark 07815 084533. Cheshire.

YAMAHA RD AIRCOOLED and LC new and used spares, some spares for all twin cylinder models from 125cc to 400cc, all prices include UK p&p. Please phone or text for details. Tel. 07540 784259. Gloucestershire.

YAMAHA VMAX engine bars, Alloy fork brace, fork springs, £25 the lot. Tel. 01291 689497; 07803 965649. Monmouthshire.

YAMAHA XJR1300 WHEELS highly polished, in excellent condition, £150 the pair. Tel. 01803 607265 or 01364 653515. Torquay.

YAMMAHA FZ600 spares, will post. Tel. Craig 07770 987038. Suffolk.

WANTED

3 BIKE TRAILER wanted. Tel. Bob 01524 735039; 079190 64123. N Lancs.

ANY MAKE or size classic motorcycle wanted in any condition, cash waiting. Tel. 07548 801403. Notts.

BENELLI 750 SEI wanted by private buyer, Benelli 750 SEI, in good standard condition and road running order. Tel. 01603 873143. Norwich.

CB900F FRAME or parts bike wanted, project or non runner considered must have log book. Tel. 07745 645013. South Yorkshire.

CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE wanted any make or size, anything considered and in any condition. Tel. 07548 801403. Notts.

DMW LEDA front wheel nuts, for Earles Forks model. £20 Tel. 01684 573789. Worcestershire.

EXHAUST SYSTEM for 1992, Yamaha 400/600 Diversion. Tel. Bob 01634 846335 after 5pm.

HAYNES WORKSHOP MANUAL on Yamaha XJ650, in line four cylinder shaft drive, 1980/82. Also required an official Yamaha Owners Manual for the Yamaha XJ650 (1980/82). Tel. 07922 600251 between 6.30pm and 8.30pm. Hampshire.

HONDA CB900/750 dohc frame or project bike. Tel. 07745 645013. South Yorkshire.

HONDA CB900F frame, spares or project bike must have log book, Yorks/Lancs areas. Tel. 07745 645013. South Yorkshire.

HONDA CD175A Sloper, centre stand. Tel. 01978 290123. Clwyd.

HONDA CD175A front brake cable and clutch cable. Tel. 01978 290123. Clwyd.

HONDA CUB wanted, 50, 70, 90, 100 any condition considered, good or bad. Tel. 07867 904777 or 01159 303677. Derbyshire.

HONDA CX500A black, PGO 456V, looking for bike, frame or V5, am a previous owner. Tel. Kevin 07745 825082, leave message. Hertfordshire.

HONDA GOLDWING 1800cc wanted Insta trike towpac bolt on kit for my 2004 Honda Goldwing, any condition, cash waiting. Tel. Paul 01516 788883. Wirral.

HONDA VF1000R seat hump, must be in good condition with no cracks. Honda CB600F left hand side panel, again no cracks. Kawasaki Eddie Lawson replica 1000R or 1100R, must be in good condition. Tel. Paul 01914 561652. Tyne & Wear.

HONDA VT250 useable exhaust wanted for resto project, also spares, will buy complete bike if cheap. Tel. 01625 576013. Cheshire.

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HONDA CB900F'S wanted, barn/shed finds, abandoned projects, anything CB900F considered, cash waiting. Tel. Mike 07973 989277. Kent.

HONDA 400/4 PARTS I am selling my stock of parts from frames with engines to some original Honda parts, too many to list, contact me with any enquiry for details & photos Tel. 01773 823281. Derbyshire.

HONDA XBR500 wanted by private cash buyer, anything considered. Tel. Pete 07881 933596. Oxfordshire.

KAWASAKI H2 750 TRIPLE 1971/1972 in blue wanted, cash waiting private buyer can renovate if required will travel please contact me if you are considering selling a blue H2. Tel. 07585 973051. Kent.

KAWASAKI KZ750 B2 1977, twin wanted front mounted engine crash bars. Tel. Mike 07511 688088. Birmingham.

LE VELOCETTE (Noddy Bike) by 'old un' wanting to keep his hand in by rebuilding or perfecting, price must reflect condition. Tel. 01772 436944. Lancs.

LOOKING FOR A BIKE model I had years ago. Honda XL250/XL500, Suzuki TS250ER, or similar, to regain my mouth, runner or project. Have cash, will travel. Tel. 07984 950257. Derbys.

LOOKING FOR RG500 to restore back to its former glory, if you have a barn or garage find or crash damaged bike then please contact me. Tel. 07944 404152. Worcestershire.

LOOKING FOR HONDA CB72 512 PF my bike, new 1963, any info. Tel. 07971 531381. Hants.

MOTO GUZZI Le Mans II, 1978 onwards, must be 100% Tel. 01642 484073 after 6pm. Cleveland.

ROCKET THREE workshop manual wanted. Tel. 07828 103437.

SILENCERS WANTED for 1992 Yamaha 400cc Diversion. Tel. Bob 07634 846335 after 5pm. Chatham.

SINGLE SEAT SIDECAR and chassis, coach built. Tel. 01535 611181. West Yorks.

SUZUKI AP50 spares wanted bike or parts exhaust pipe and pedal gear. Tel. Dave 07752 137780; 01612 828728. Cheshire.

SUZUKI DR500 parts wanted, maybe complete/incomplete machine. Tel. 01305 826670. Dorset.

SUZUKI GS1100G 1982, shaft drive, good condition engine or bottom end required for bike rebuild, complete bike considered, cash waiting. Tel. Colin 01935 478050. Somerset.

SUZUKI GT 250 X7 wanted for restoration anything considered. Tel. Mark 07971 725179. Notts.

SUZUKI GT750A must be in good original condition or well restored with good original three into four exhaust. Tel. 01323 740011. E Sussex.

SUZUKI GT550 lower right exhaust wanted for a running bike not a show bike, clean & rust free please. Tel. 07828 909136. Lincs.

SUZUKI RE5M rotary, globe type turn signals/indicators wanted, please phone if you have some for sale! Tel. Allan 07846 525663. Somerset.

SUZUKI RGV250 VJ21 lower centre part of fairing at front under radiator, joins side halves together. Tel. 01455 446415. Leics.

SUZUKI T500 side panel wanted for my T500K the badge would be nice but it's not important. Tel. 07756 695628. Cheshire.

WANTED FOR 1977 Kawasaki KZ750 B2 twin, fully working & in very good condition a starter motor. Tel. Mike 07511 688088. Birmingham.

WANTED FOR A Yamaha DT50MX, 1988 a carb, rubber airbox connector, heat shield for the front of the exhaust, harness Tel. 07717 893114. Gloucestershire.

WANTED FOR KAWASAKI KZ750 1977, B2 twin a working good condition starter motor. Tel. Mike 07551 688088. Birmingham.

WANTED LIGHTWEIGHT BIKE yours too heavy, possible exchange Yamaha two stroke great condition, sound investment, viewing essential, why? Tel. Al 01935 472584. Somerset.

WANTED SET OF CARB'S for 1994 Suzuki GSX600F. Tel. 07972 840868. Staffs.

WANTED SUZUKI GT380 or 550 for project other triples considered. Tel. 07588 776055; 01928 571026. Cheshire.

WANTED SUZUKI GT750A must be in good original condition or well restored with good original three into four exhaust. Tel. 01323 740011. East Sussex.

WANTED TESTI OR GITANE Champion Veloce cantilever for restoration circa 1977, can collect. Tel. 07802 207987. Leics.

WANTED YAMAHA XJ650 Maxim spares, seat lock, rera indicators, n/s tank badge, o/s exhaust cover/deflector and ignition switch, why? Tel. 01364 653515; 01803 607265. Torquay, Devon.

WORKSHOP MANUALS wanted for the following: Cossack 175cc, Voskhod electronic ignition models, Puch Magnum child's scrambler, Suzuki LT50, child's quad and anything on Minsk Tula's or WSK 175cc, buy photocopy. Tel. 01685 871243. Mid Glam.

YAMAHA DS6 1969, kick start shaft or complete engine, pillion footrests, will collect Tel. Les 01594 836552. Gloucester.

YAMAHA XS650/XS400/TR1 OR SR500 wanted, runner or project, have cash, will travel. Tel. 07984 950257. Derbys.

MISCELLANEOUS

20 LITRES DRUM 'Optima' racing 2/stroke oil, Specs, JASO, FD. ISO, EGD. API, TC, situated two miles from Donington Park, £100 onvo, buyer collects Tel. 07979 558308. Derbyshire.

ABBA STAND for use with m/cycle, not fitted with centre set and, enables work carried out where only side stand fitted, easily fitted, £50 Tel. 02920 561669. S Glam.

BELL HELMET open-face, matt black, as new, only worn twice, c/w 'Bell' bag, £120 on Tel. 01209 214457. Cornwall.

BELL OPEN FACE matt black helmet, as new, only worn twice, complete with original Bell bag, medium, £95 Tel. 01209 214457. Cornwall.

BOOK Soft Science of Motorcycle Racing by Keith Code, £10. Tel. 07852 921265. Powys.

CHERISHED PLATE R6 FRD, attention all Yamaha R6 owners, all reasonable offers considered. Tel. 07583 242529. Brighton.

FACTORY SUZUKI RG400/500 service manual, good condition, £25 onvo plus postage Tel. 01253 765414 or 07710 467529. Lancs.

FAIRING WANTED for Honda CD250U Rickman or similar, Tel. 01489 877516. Hants.

HARLEY DAVIDSON BACKREST to fit 2006 Streetbob, good condition, £80; Harley Davidson clutch cable for Streetbob, as new, £75; Harley Davidson bike jacket, £50; ladies black bike jacket, £50; Clutchmaster, will fit VTR 1000 Bandit 1200 and other bikes, £40. Tel. 07790 9344835. Staffs.

HAYNES MANUALS Suzuki GSX1400 Honda C50, C70, C90, Yamaha YPVS 350, Yamaha XJ650/750 fours Harley Davidson Sportster, £10 each plus £2 p&p Tel. 01642 280530; 07816 340143. North Yorkshire.

HAYNES MANUALS Yamaha Fazer 1000, VFR750, VTR1000, all as new, £10 each plus p&p; rear caliper GSF, GSXR, 600, £25 Tel. 01432 265726. Hereford.

HJC FULL FACE HELMET red/black, Large, first £8, collect only no post. Tel. 07471 739455. Leeds, Yorks

HARLEY SOFTAIL TANK Dash panel part no 71283-01, new £20. Detachable side plates chrome part no 53810-00B with padded back rest new, £50. Tel. 07732 125886. Lincs.

HONDA BLACKBIRD Baglux tank bag with harness in blue, £45; Powerbronze d/ bubble screen and tinted flip-up screen, £20 pair; Held blue magnetic tank bag. £15 Tel. 07979 336335. North Lincs.

HONDA CBF 1000F/FA/FT/FS, brand new owners manual, £10 plus p&p; Honda CBF 1000F/FA/FT/FS, brand new tool kit, £15 plus p&p; brand new Kawasaki 1400ZZR light tint d/bubble screen, £50 plus p&p; almost new Kawasaki 1400ZZR smoked tint spoiler screen, £50 plus p&p; Hyperpro (RSC) type steering damper off 1400 ZZR, will fit most bikes with correct fitting kit and have ZZR kit, £125 plus p&p (damper only). Tel. 01805 623310. Devon.

HONDA M/C top end gasket sets, XL250, £20; CB250/G/T/S, £25; CB/CL 200, £25; CD/CM185, £25; XR75, £20; Honda SL125 K1 parts list, manual, £12. Tel. 01484 663007. W Yorks.

HONDA VFR1200FA inner pannier bags, free but must collect or pay postage. Tel. 07728 274552. Lincs.

HONDA VFR1200FA 2010 Bazzaz Z Bomb, eliminates performance restrictions, with fitting instructions, £30 Tel. 07900 371020. Northumberland.

HONDA VFR1200FA 2010, Baglux tank cover, black & red, as new, £50 Tel. 07900 371020. Northumberland.

HONDA VFR800 V-Tec 2002, full years MoT, Givi luggage, Scottolier, alarm, new tyres and front pads, owned for six years, selling because bike is too heavy for me now, £2000 Tel. 07752 459539. Greater London.

LADIES FRANK THOMAS leather jeans size 12, 43" long from waist, hardly worn, £45 postage extra. Tel. 02380 227458.

MAGAZINES: full set of 1970s On Two Wheels magazines including original free poster, £25 + post. Also full years or individual copies of classic mechanics magazines all as new condition, ring with you requirements. Tel. 07986 754713. Derbyshire.

MERCEDES 320SL which I would like to swap or part exchange for a classic motorcycle, preferably 70s 80s Japanese!! Contact for further details (pics etc) £3995 Tel. 07712 839727 texts please. County Down.

MAGAZINES: Practical Sportsbike, issues 1-50 inclusive, good condition, £100 Tel. 07899 770367. Devon.

MOTO GUZZI V7 classic Helmet, size small red/white/black, matches bike open face with Integral visor unused, £30 onvo. Tel. 01604 831349. Northants.

MYFORD ML7 precision model engineering lathe, top quality condition, complete with tooling change gears etc, photos available, £650 Tel. 07765 507232. West Yorkshire.

OFFICIAL HARLEY DAVIDSON Service Manual, XLH models, 1998, £20. Harley Davidson Performance handbook (Buzzell), £12. Haynes Harley Davidson Sportsters, £10 or £35 for all. Tel. 01642 280530; 07816 340143. North Yorkshire.

R1200GS 2004-2011 front and rear sergeant seats, black with silver piping, (rider's seat low version), £250; Givi Trekker 52ltr mono-key top box (takes 2 full-face lids) + complete fitting kit for GS, £220; all in spotless condition (selling due to RT purchase). Tel. 01224 277418. Aberdeenshire.

SUZUKI OWNERS HANDBOOKS 1990 GSXR750, 1997 GSXR600, 1979 RM250 Motocross, £5 each + p&p Tel. 01343 544528. Morayshire.

TOOL KIT Honda CBF1000F/FA/FT/FS, brand new, £15 Tel. 01805 623310. Devon.

V-STROM LUGGAGE genuine Suzuki, fitted at the moment to my 2009 bike but I'm changing it, for sale is the panniers, pannier mounting rails and top box, £300 Tel. 075900 10235 or send a message. Lancs.

YAMAHA XJ900 Shaftie, in very nice condition, occasional second gear spin, otherwise ideal, reliable winter inexpensive transport, only £475 or swap Honda Twin 125/200. Tel. 01525 378332. South Beds.

YAMAHA XJR1300 Beowulf stainless steel, oil cooler radiator cover new, unused, £25 Tel. 07732 125886. Lincs.


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Oil be alright!

We take a sideways look at the ubiquitous two-stroke oil injection system. What could possibly go wrong?

WORDS AND PHOTOS: STEVE COOPER



When the Japanese embraced two-strokes with open arms they did so for one reason and one reason only... simplicity. Cheap and easy to make accurately, the humble stinkwheels rapidly became a cash cow.

With the advent of tuned exhaust systems, disc valve induction, squish band cylinder head technology and optimised porting the bikes just got better and better. Yet perhaps the most significant development or enhancement in terms of owner/rider benefit was the fitment of oil injection pumps.

Each manufacturer made huge capital of this quantum leap for the humble stroker and to all intents and purposes it removed the last genuine objection to owning a two-stroke. With no messy premix to muck

about with, all the owner had to do was make sure the oil tank wasn't running low and then the road was theirs for the taking.

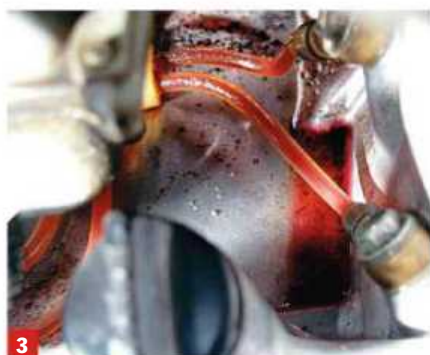
With oil consumption levels better than many British four-strokes, there really was no logical reason to complain about practicality either. Posi-Force, CCI, Autolube, Superlube, Oil Injection – the main players each had a different name for what amounted to the same thing and many of CMM's demographic have come to depend upon these systems.

We may take automatic oiling for granted but occasionally things can and do go wrong. We've previously looked inside a Yamaha pump which is the heart of any two-stroke lubrication system but what about the peripherals? Do they fail? What are the tell-tale signs? Can they be fixed and if so how? Read on for a snapshot of two-stroke oiling issues and possible fixes.



1/ Yes it could well be the oil pump itself leaking but equally it could be the outlet union or even the gasket behind the bleed screw. All should be thoroughly investigated. **2/** At the delivery end up at the point of injection into the inlet track there's evidence of another leak. It might just be a loose union, but equally it could be a cracked pipe.

Simple solutions: Don't over tighten bolts or cables used on injector systems.



3/ A puddle of oil on a crankcase should always ring alarm bells. If oil's leaking out the engine's being deprived of vital lubrication. **4/** You'll struggle now to find the OEM washers used on oil line banjos. On alloy or steel unions you can use a soft copper washer but fibre ones are normally kinder to the gasket faces. **5/** Ensure replacements are the same diameters internally and externally. Thickness isn't generally an issue as long as the oil feed hole is not obscured. Use the correct spanner and don't over tighten!

Gluing rigid oil pipes

The pre-formed oil pipes found on numerous older Japanese strokers are made from rigid plastics such as polypropylene or polyethylene. They are referred to as low surface energy materials and generally don't take kindly to being glued. Before broken joints, such as we've seen in the article, can be repaired they need to be totally free of grease and oil.

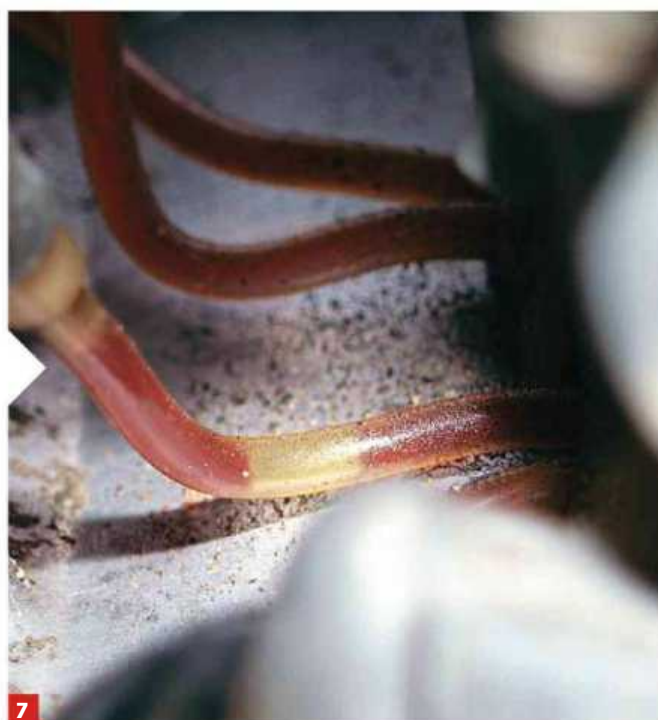
Careful cleaning using a lint free cloth with carb cleaner or similar followed by acetone should do the job perfectly. If your oil pipe or union feels sticky after cleaning then the cleaning solvents have permeated the plastic. Allow the solvent to fully evaporate

then carry on. Before the two parts can be reunited both need to be suitably primed; if not the adhesive bond will fail pretty much straight away. Those fussy plastics come under the heading of polyolefins and are similar to your household washing up bowl i.e. slightly oily to the touch.

Both the internal collar of the fitting and the external neck of the pipe should be carefully coated with a polyolefin primer/activator such as Three Bond 1796, Loctite 770, 3M AC11 Scotch-Weld or similar. Apply and allow to dry, as per the manufacturer's specific instructions. Now apply a thin coat of low viscosity, non-gelled, super

glue to the outside of the oil supply pipe **ONLY** and carefully fit it into the primed socket. You only get one shot at this and in order to get the correct orientation it's best to have the socket end loosely in place on the pump end via its banjo bolt and to keep the supply end loose at the crankcase, carb or barrel.

If there's any doubt about fitment, ease of access or alignment try a dry run beforehand; once superglue has bonded there's no getting the components apart. Allow the glue to properly cure overnight and then prime the oil. You should find it is oil and airtight ready for use.



6/ The black rubber washers are aftermarket tat and Yamaha's listed replacements are copper, which will damage the hard plastic banjos. Fibre washers are probably the only viable option four decades on. **7/** Air bubbles in an oil line are never good news. If it's not the sealing washers under the banjo unions then it's unlikely to be a straightforward fix. Whatever the cause, rectification is vital.

Flexible lines

The oil lines used on later strokers are normally flexible opaque tubing secured at either end with some form of metal clip. Although the metal clips don't physically seal the pipe to the oil tank, pump, banjo bolt etc. they perform a vital role despite their diminutive appearance.

Look carefully and the pipe will be pushed over a larger diameter collar integral with the fitting. This collar stretches the pipe as it's pushed over and forms the seal. The pipe's natural elasticity grasps the pipe above and below the collar thereby effecting an oil-tight seal.

The metal clip, either contracting wire or roll spring, sits above the collar and prevents the pipe being accidentally wrenched from the fitting. Road debris, vibration or rough maintenance can all subtly and gradually work an oil pipe off its fitting. Those apparently primitive clips perform a vital job; omit them at your peril!



8/ A gentle wiggle of the pipe at the other end and this is what happens. The main pipe was a heat-formed swaging when new but the joint has failed over time with heat, stress and vibration, allowing air into the pipe.



9/



10/



11/



12/

9/ The plastic pipes are hard to find and expensive, so we're going to repair them using a bit of lateral thought and some clever chemistry. The pipe needs to be degreased, primed and glued using these materials. **10/** And there we have a perfectly working, viable, long-term repair that has cost less than sourcing an NOS replacement. One year on our adhesive repair is still functioning as intended. **11/** On a Yamaha this is would be a simple pipe secured on a spigot by a clip. On a Suzuki there's a total of five jointing faces with seals and gaskets plus a non-return valve. The black crud indicates at least one of them is leaking. **12/** If your bike runs black oil lines and you think there may be an issue, install clear tubing to check for aeration. This dodge should work for any stroker if you fit oil feed unions and banjo bolts of the correct dimensions. **cm**

Kawasaki

ZX-7R



SPECIFICATION

Kawasaki

ZX-7R

YEARS AVAILABLE
1996-2003

MAJOR CHANGES
None, only colour changes

PRICE NEW
£9120 at launch in 1996

VALUES NOW
£1300-£3500

VERDICT
A great piece of superbike history and pretty good value too!

FOR: gorgeous looks and plenty around

AGAINST: some tacky ones around, rotting exhausts.

The Kawasaki ZX-7R has been around for nearly 20 years and it still looks fast even when standing still. While Suzuki was trimming down with the SRAD 750 (179 kilos) Kawasaki entered the market with the 7R weighing in at nearly 25kg more, kicking out around the same sort of horsepower. In the 750 class Honda had its own take on the market with the sports-touring VFR750FS and Yamaha's YZF750 was a bit long in the tooth.

On paper the Kawasaki shouldn't have been in the hunt with the SRAD, but both sold well. For the ZX-7R its extra bulk and top notch front-end evened things up out in the real world and while the SRAD then and now is a little manic and demanding (which is okay if you're in the mood) the Kawasaki is somewhat more composed.

Where the SRAD flaps and slaps, the ZX just ploughs through unaffected. Not that the Kawasaki isn't sharp and precise – it is just that, it's just not as sharp as the more focused Suzuki that, for many people, will make it a better prospect all round. This is shown as it also seems to have attracted more sensible owners who don't go for quite the same amount of bolt-on tat as Suzuki owners. Remember when you buy that some bits, such as quality exhausts like Akrapovic, are worthy additions, after all, the original is heavy and restrictive – if desirable for the collector.

Of the two ZX-7R's I've ridden both sounded rather harsh motor-wise but apparently this isn't a sign of any impending mechanical mischief. Some were just a bit noisier than others, so I've heard. The motor is a bigger bore and shorter stroke than the ZXR it replaced and is very reliable by all accounts.

ASK ANDY



Andy Bolas knows a thing or two about finding the classics of the future – he owns plenty! He knows what you need to tuck away for the future – and this is a good bet, the Kawasaki ZX-7R.

A few common problems were carb icing in winter – this can be helped by using a fuel additive like Silkolene Pro FST or similar, head bearings which were only threatened with grease at the factory, early models warped their discs and the six-pot Tokico callipers can go off quickly if they are not well maintained. A friend of mine recently rebuilt the front brakes on his and is still in shock over the price of the genuine seals and pistons.

You need to be on the look out for the usual stuff rotting, so that means downpipes, warped discs, badly repaired bodywork – do be aware on these modern classic sportsbikes that consumables can cost you a huge amount. So, a bike needing new tyres, chain and sprockets can easily cost you another £400.

Recently, there have been a few very low-mileage bikes for sale at £3k plus, I think if you are looking for an investment, you shouldn't lose out if you need to move the bike on. On the other hand if you just want a decent user £1500 should get you a reasonable bike. Go for it! **cmm**

DAVE COOPER TRAILERS

 Single Bike: £279.00
 Double Bike: £329.00
 Treble Bike: £379.00
 Choice of 4 colours
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Next month

ULTIMATE TWO-STROKE: Stan Stephens finishes the RD1200LC, V6
– but where will it go?

KAWASAKI W1: Steve Cooper throws a leg over a very classic Kawasaki.

SUZUKI GSX1100E: John Nutting rides a super-cool special.

RACE READY: Chris Moss tells us about a Phase One endurance race Suzuki GSX1100E.

SUZUKI GSX-R750F: The Suzuki GB project is built up at the Motorcycle Live stand.
Bert makes the tea...

PLUS!

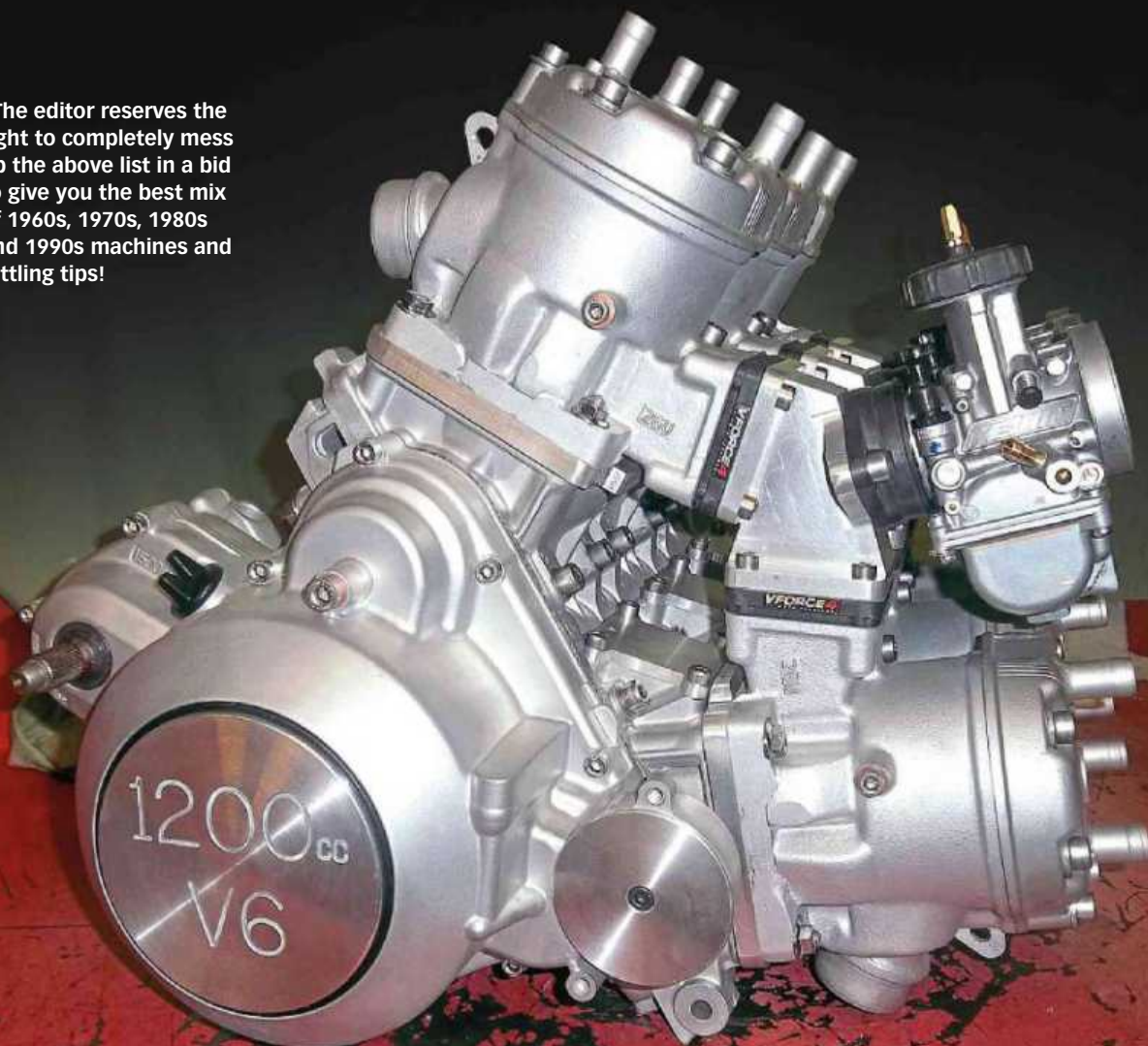
WORKSHOP: How to make brake hoses, more on electrics and more tips, hints and cheats in the workshop.

JANUARY PROJECT BIKES: Bertie strips his Kawasaki GPz900R and finds out a few things, some not so good. Ella Middleton finishes her Yamaha TDR250 and James Whitham is close to finishing his Suzuki X7.

AND MUCH MORE! DON'T MISS IT!*

ON SALE: DECEMBER 16

*The editor reserves the right to completely mess up the above list in a bid to give you the best mix of 1960s, 1970s, 1980s and 1990s machines and fettling tips!





Daytona Dreaming

Honda had to go racing with their new CB750, because if they didn't someone else would and maybe not as successfully.

Could you imagine some Honda dealer racing a converted CB750 themselves and (perish the thought) the thing expiring, or – maybe even worse – they won?

US Honda dealers were keen for Honda to try their luck in the 1970 Daytona 200 – the premier event in the bike racing calendar over there

– and the CB750 Racing Type was ridden by Tommy Robb, Ralph Bryans, Bill Smith and Dick Mann. Mann was able to coax his CB750 to the flag and victory after the others were sidelined with technical issues in a race where legends such as Mike Hailwood and Gary Nixon took part.

After the win, racing continued for Honda and the CB750. This shot is from 1973 where the RSC machine of Morio Sumiya (on right) took sixth place in the Daytona 200 race.

What was the shape of things to come was the now famous Honda tricolour design of red, white and blue. These colours have taken 500cc Grand Prix wins and championships with the like of Freddie Spencer, we've had them on road bikes, including Honda's NS and VF machines and it's still seen today on Honda's road-going Grand Prix replica the RC213V.

● If you want to check out the amazing shots in Morton's Archive then go to: www.mortonsarchive.com **cmm**

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